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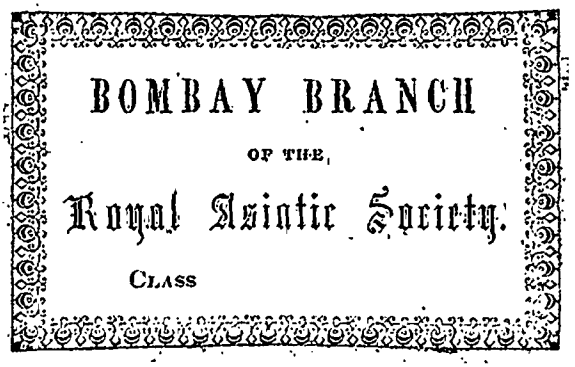

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INTRODUCTION.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A SEVEN YEARS' RESIDENCE IN GREECE.

SEVEN years have come and gone since this, the most beautiful of classic lands, became our own familiar home. Seven years! how truly the duration of time is of a value purely comparative! It seems a very mockery to talk of such a period in such a place; even in presence of those sublime remains of the once glorious Athens, that, like the 'dead corse' of some great one departed, have lain in state upon these shores for centuries unnumbered, bathed in the eternal smile of that blue sky! The passing of seven ages could leave no trace upon the monuments, where sits enthroned that Past, who feeds from century to century on the generations which its great purveyor, Death, provides, and robes itself in the glory stolen from dissolving empires! And who shall track the flight of a thousand such periods of time, in the unalterable sunshine of that most radiant heaven!

But seven years in the life of one human being is a period from which volumes might be drawn, were it but the record of their own brief joys and sorrows, or even the history of one individual mind; and how much more when it has been passed in a land whose glowing loveliness alone has stamped each day with images of beauty, whose past, teeming with grand and solemn recollections,

has given a deep interest to the events of its fleeting present, and the prospects of its uncertain future.

Still more, however, the actual position of Greece when we first sought a resting-place on her time-honoured shores, was calculated to impress vividly on the memory each occurrence of our sojourn there. She had but just arisen from that degrading thraldom, which for so long a period had blotted her immortal name from the scale of nations; she had burst the Moslem chains, and she was free.

But the captive, when his fetters first are loosed, can feel no power in his paralysed limbs; it is long before the life-blood flows freely through his veins again; and so for a time did the regenerate country struggle, but feebly, to shake off the moral stupor into which she had been flung.

We saw her first faint efforts—we marked her progress day by day, even as though we were watching the gradual restoration of life and health, to some fair being raised up from mortal sickness, when each hour brightens the returning glow upon the cheek and the sparkle in the eye. Gradually we became identified with all her varying hopes and fears; rejoicing with her rejoicing people, when some country more highly-favoured now reflected back on Greece the lights it had derived from her; and sorrowing with them, when the Great Powers to which she is allied threatened in their clashing interests to rob her once again of her dearly-bought repose.

Very soon it was no longer a stranger land for us; friends gathered round us from amongst the warm-hearted people; the idiom became familiar as our own; and many of the natural prejudices we shared with other strangers, against the religion or the customs of the country, gave way before a closer insight into the practical effects of both, than most travellers have any opportunity of obtaining.

The interest we now take in this country, and the

feelings with which we leave it, must, therefore, be very different from those of the tourists who visit these shores in the ordinary manner.

Ten days or a fortnight is usually considered by the visitor a sufficient length of time for the performance of all that is incumbent on him during his stay, according to the established rules of sight-seeing. He can explore the ruins of the capital, visit the Temple of Jupiter by moonlight, and watch the sunset from the Parthenon; he can climb Mount Pentelicus, and fail to see the plain of Marathon from the summit—for which purpose he ascended; he may drive to Eleusis, there to wonder what has become of the ruins; and go to Mars Hill to read the seventeenth chapter of the Acts; and to Salamis, to quote Lord Byron's poems; and then, having descanted on the admirable preservation of the Temple of Theseus, deplored the fading beauty of the "maid of Athens," and gathered together a few mistaken notions on the political movements in Greece, from persons interested in falsifying her present position, he departs, carrying with him a confused recollection of heat, and dust, and gay costumes, beautiful ruins and uncomfortable inns.

This is the general routine pursued by travellers; and if they have no higher object than to beguile the tedium of a portion of their brief life, and store the treasure-houses of their memory with fair images that shall hereafter flash upon their midnight dreams in the likeness of some glorious temple, with its snowy columns cleaving the deep blue air, or of some lonely fount with myrtles wreathing over it, and stars that gleam within its waters,—then such a visit as this is amply adequate to the purpose; but it would have been better, perhaps, if some of those who have given their opinion of Greece and the Greeks to the public, had remembered that it is not *thus*, at least,

that a country can be known, or the character of a nation justly appreciated.

For us, in looking back on the long period of our residence here, it is wonderful to find how soon we lost the intense interest which must ever be inspired by that mighty skeleton (as it were) of ancient Greece which still is visible, crumbling and dismembered to us all—in the absorbing excitement produced by the precarious state of the modern country, which is rising, Phœnix-like, from its ashes.

Were I, however, even competent to lead, I doubt much if any one would have the courage to follow me through the intricacies of Greek politics for that period; and it would certainly require a far abler hand than mine to unravel the hopeless confusion of ideas which seems to prevail in other countries on this subject. I believe the final impression which remains in our mind, is the conviction, that, if Greece had fair play, there would be hope for her yet; although, with so many varying interests contending round her, this is perhaps exactly what we have least reason to expect.

It seems scarce possible, now that all are past alike, to separate from each other the bright succession of glowing summers, and soft mild winters, which made our life in Greece seem one fair dream. The remembrance of them is like the image which memory stamps upon the mind of some pleasing landscape we shall see no more, where its most striking features stand out prominent from the general picture ; for so we now find that the more remarkable details of our existence alone detach themselves, from the unbroken period of our sojourn here.

There can, indeed, be little variation in the regular routine of life in this semi-oriental country, for the climate alone imposes laws which are not to be infringed.

During the winter, or rather during the season resem-

bling a bright English summer, which is so called, Athens becomes the universal resort; when the new town, seemingly such a confused collection of ill-paved streets and strange-looking houses springing up among the ruins, nevertheless manages to produce many a comfortable residence.

The society of the capital for those few winter months, though peculiar and very limited, presents as lively and pleasant a circle as could be met with anywhere. The court and the *corps diplomatique* form, of course, the foundation; to which are added the principal Greek families, and the strangers who pass in such numbers through the town. But the peculiarity which renders it so "piquant," is the extraordinary assemblage of natives of all different countries of which it is composed; who, having adopted French as their common language, have become pleasantly amalgamated without losing any of their distinctive characteristics.

This gathering together of such varied elements, has of necessity freed the modern society of Athens from most of those conventional fallacies and established absurdities—that general narrowness of view, in short—which must always gather round those circles that are formed only by local connexion, and never broken in upon by any influence from without.

It was absolutely necessary that the persons whose creed, education, and manners, were all so totally different, should each one lay down somewhat of their national prejudices and preconceived opinions, when meeting on the common ground, where, as a mass, they were to constitute "le monde d'Athènes." This naturally tends to produce a liberty of speech, and still greater freedom of opinion, which renders the mutual intercourse as easy as it is pleasant.

We owe something, however, to the locality in Athens

as well as elsewhere. The Greeks are as ambitious as they are quick witted; they who, not thirty years ago, were plunged in the darkest slavery, and, still more lately, were cutting their way to freedom with swords that streamed with blood, while friends and relatives fell murdered round them, having once more obtained a right to rank among the nations of Europe, are now determined to be outdone by none in the most trivial details of modern luxury and refinement.

They certainly have acquired, in an incredibly short space of time, that artificial polish, which, unfortunately, seems universally acknowledged to be the stamp of civilisation.

With the rising generation, most of whom have been educated in France or Germany, it has indeed become already a second nature; but amongst those who have adopted the European manners, second hand, it is often extremely amusing to see the old Turkish habits peeping out behind the assumed "savoir vivre," or the kleft-like propensities of fierce palikars unconsciously displaying themselves in a ball-room.

We derive also a certain singularity in the ordinary topics of conversation, from the classic ground on which we tread, which could exist nowhere else. Scarce a day elapses that the workmen do not bring to light, in digging the foundations of some future house, or repairing the walls of a tottering church, some of those treasures of antiquity of which this soil is so prolific. Often some ancient tomb is uncovered suddenly, which can no more indeed give up its dead, but still preserves, as though in mockery, the strange rich ornaments that decked, long since, the corruptible frame whose very dust is vanished now.

The poorest of the sepulchres is certain to contain at least a few of those beautiful little vases, the lacrymatories, the interpretation of whose singular figures is a science in itself. When found in the graves of females, their form

would generally seem to indicate that they had been used for containing scents and other requisites of the toilette: in one that was found not long since, there was a preparation evidently of rouge, or some such paint for the face, where the mark left by the pressure of two fingers of a small hand was distinctly visible.

Still greater, however, is the excitement produced by the discovery of a statue, an occurrence far more rare, when suddenly from beneath our very feet is disinterred one of those marvellous pieces of sculpture which are so hopelessly beyond all imitation. There is I know not what of haunting beauty in those marble shapes, which no art has ever since produced; it seems almost as though it were by a mysterious power that they had given to the senseless stone, the life, the soul, that glows in its spotless whiteness.

Even where it is only a bas-relief designed as an ordinary funeral stone, there is an unspeakable solemnity in the aspect of the sitting figure which represents the deceased; and in the expression of the veiled mourners who stand around, a sadness so intense, that it seems scarce possible not to fancy that human tears are stealing down those marble cheeks.

There is one statue—lost in the remotest island of the Cyclades, which, if once seen, for ever after haunts the memory like a very ghost: it is the size of life, and has evidently been intended as the portrait of a young female; every fold of the flowing graceful drapery, every vein on the small white feet, has been exquisitely given, but the face, the divine face, that for countless ages has worn that beseeching look of gentlest, most mournful, entreaty, how marvellously lovely it is! We know not what is the timid petition that seems just passing from her parted lips; but so perfectly has the expression been conveyed in every line of those delicate features, that we could almost imagine

the living form had grown to marble in the breathless suspense which followed her unanswered prayer.

We find the interesting details of such discoveries as these, give a far higher tone to the mere general conversation of the Athenian society, than is to be found in the extensive circles of countries more enlightened.

From the season of the vintage, to the termination of the carnival, an easy and constant intercourse is kept up, which tends to make this period pass both rapidly and pleasantly. And then suddenly, some fine morning, the terrible sirocco wind arrives unpitying from the very desert itself, and in one day so loads the atmosphere with a stifling miasma, and covers the whole town, inhabitants not excepted, with such a choking, burning sand, that, as if by enchantment, the whole population, at least of the higher classes, disappears from the capital, and takes refuge in the mountain villages; there they pass luxuriously the long season of burning heat, which would be so intolerable among the white glaring stones and arid fields of Athens.

Those mountain refuges, how cool and fresh, and yet how sunny and how bright they are! Those little nests, embosomed in the green luxuriant hills, with their gardens of myrtle and pomegranate, and their sombre olive groves, which the singing birds so haunt! Where, through the unchanging glory of the long Grecian summer, we may dwell sheltered and at rest; half forgetting, as our eyes grow accustomed to the eternal cloudlessness of that sky, where the serene smile is fixed as on the face of the dead who have departed in peace, that there are climes less favoured, where tempests and mists disfigure the fair face of heaven, and dark clouds blot out the sunshine with tears, as though they wept for a fallen world!

Still more we are apt to forget, as the spirit learns insensibly to share in the deep peace that hangs over those quiet

spots, so utterly apart from the world and its fierce restlessness, that elsewhere there are storms raging which are not borne from the whirlwind, or cradled in the caverns of the North but which man in his madness or his arrogance can raise, who has the power to blast this fair nature, and turn its pure waters into blood, by the excess of those passions to which he makes himself a most degraded slave; when in arms against the stern destiny that would discipline his soul.

Even the distant echoes of that ceaseless agitation, which seems the very atmosphere in which men breathe most freely when struggling to their tombs, led on by false ambition, or misguided impulses,—these all die away long before they reach our lonely resting-places: where the monotony of life is as undisturbed as the cloudlessness of heaven.

All of human nature that surrounds us is the scanty population of the village peasantry, whose profound and unaffected ignorance and honest superstition are an unspeakable relief, after having been continually brought in contact with the spirit of small and pitiful intrigue, which poisons every thing in the capital.

It is a strange dreamy kind of life that we lead in those mountain solitudes, which, charming as it is, presents perhaps too few opportunities for advancing in intellectual improvement or benefitting others, to be altogether desirable.

Each day is unvarying in its occupations and amusements; for each day the gorgeous sunrise bursts into life with the same sublime pageant at its birth, and we must never fail to wake while still the soft night hovers on pitying wings over the weary world it has lulled to slumber, that we may go out and look from some favourable point on a spectacle so beautiful. We must watch the first faint glow, stealing over the far distant shadowy isle of Egina, that seems to heave upon the bosom of the waters as though quivering with rapture beneath the smile

of the morning; and see in breathless admiration how the pure light of the new-born day, gliding from wave to wave, carries its bright presence over that blue slumbering ocean, and onward comes, sweeping the plains with its golden robes, till even the waving of the dark olive groves in the breeze looks like the rising and falling of a silver sea. And then, advancing still, the infant rays illuminate that old Acropolis, so distant, though nothing on the unbroken plain can hide it from our view; and straightway the noble Parthenon starts into life, each glittering column defined against the clear blue sky, as though with a magic touch the sunbeams had but just created it! A few minutes more, and the great mountain, which overshadows us, itself is clothed in sunlight, and not only the darkness is a thing that was and is not, but we can scarce believe that ever it shall be again!

This unrivalled sight must be seen every day; and every day the indispensable siesta must beguile those hours when the world seems to hang breathless in the burning air, subdued into utter lifelessness by the tremendous noonday sun, at the very hour when it is wont to be most busy and bustling; and when at last the day is waning, and the sea has drawn down that terrible sun to its breast, alluring it with the semblance in its depths of a heaven still fairer than the fair reality, joyfully welcoming the darkness in which there is no gloom,—what better can we do than mount our horses and ride to a certain height on the trackless mountain, where first we meet the cool breath of the night as it comes sighing for the departed day.

Nor can we vary the long vigil on the terrace, or the roof of the house, during those lovely hours of unspeakable repose, when we sit watching the mighty constellations, those hieroglyphics of the skies, as they unfold one by one their glittering scroll, or track the flight of the wandering

stars, the bright voyagers from heaven, as they traverse the spheres on their mysterious errands.

It is thus that the days flit by in the summer homes of Greece. There is so little variation that we should scarcely mark the flight of time, but for the ever-working nature, that replaces the wild scarlet anemones, with the pomegranate blossom, which seems to inherit their bloom, and these again with the star-like myrtle flowers and bright oleander.

The good peasants, too, remind us often that the seasons do not languish, for they never fail to bring us the first produce of their labours—the fresh almonds, and green figs, the cool water-melons, and finally the grapes. Of these there is soon such a profusion, that the very dogs, who in this country are singularly partial to the fruit of the vine, may go and riot in the vineyards till even they are satisfied.

There is one well-marked period when the villagers give up their houses for the accommodation of the silk-worms, and betake themselves to couches scarce harder then their own, beneath some sheltering tree. Not the olive, because there the deadly snake is sure to lurk, but under some huge platanist, or mulberry. Not only do they provide lodgings for this most precious and most hideous little animal, but they decorate them tastefully with green branches, that they may resemble the native bowers of the busy worm.

Another peculiarity of the summer life in Greece is, that while we are enjoying it, we would seem, to all outward appearance, to be utterly exempt from the ordinary "ills that flesh is heir to." Everywhere else, even if we carry so light a heart in our own bosom, that we are disposed to doubt if indeed a burden is too surely laid on every mortal, we are certain at least to see such bitter suffering in those around us, from the palpable evils of

penury and want, disease and crime, that we shall learn to suffer from their reflected misery. But here it is not so: poverty seems actually unknown. Not that the simple Greek peasant is rich, unless it be that negative richness which they may be said to find in their security from all material wants, produced by the benign climate and the abundant nature.

In the summer they greatly prefer, as I have said, their couch in the open air, to the most sumptuous dwelling which their fancy could picture. They gather beneath the olive trees, which shed their ready fruits upon their very head—the greater part of their simple food. The light clothing they require is an hereditary possession, descending from father to son; and thus, having food and raiment, they are therewith abundantly content.

The result of this is, that I believe there is no country in the world where beggary is so little known. Systematic begging does actually not exist, excepting in the case of one blind old mendicant, certainly the richest man of my acquaintance, who sits all day in the portico of the Temple of Theseus at Athens, and majestically receives the alms which every one hastens to bestow on him—too happy to find a legitimate object on whom to exercise the duty of charity, so strictly enjoined by their church.

We found that there was much amusement and interest in watching the process of the silk manufacture, though it does not produce such picturesque combinations as the vintage, excepting in its last stage, when the silk has to be wound off the little golden balls, and prepared for the machine. This office is always performed by the village maidens; and they certainly do succeed, with their graceful costumes, in grouping themselves into most beautiful little pictures occasionally.

We were not exempt from the common labours of this season, as we had a great number of mulberry trees in our

garden; and the recollection of this more exciting period in our quiet country life, recalls to me at the same time the strange history of one of the young girls who, during two successive summers, was employed in our service. It was a singular instance of the wild romance which seems in the East to clothe the most common incidents of daily life, and which causes the private history of each individual to be replete with striking events, which would be invaluable for a novel or a poem.

This young Greek girl, when she first came to us, was about fifteen years of age, and nowhere, certainly, either in Greece or in any other part of the world, have I seen any thing to be compared to the perfect loveliness of her face. The high idea we are apt to form of Grecian beauty is liable to great disappointment on visiting the country. It is only among the very young girls that it is to be found at all, for their bloom is scarce less evanescent than that of a spring flower; and it is undoubtedly replaced by a greater degree of ugliness than usually falls to the lot of old women anywhere.

Even during our long residence there, I cannot recall more than one or two instances of that symmetrical perfection of feature, which is thought to belong especially to this country.

None, however, could stand a comparison with Katinko, the little silk-winder. She came, along with her mother, to be hired, and we soon perceived that there was something very peculiar in the manners and appearance of both. There were many traces of former magnificence in the dress of the old woman, who had a truly remarkable countenance. A white veil, of the most delicate silk gauze, was wrapped round her head, and half covered her dusky, sun-burnt face, which was lit up by the blackest and fiercest pair of eyes I ever beheld,

These she was continually turning to and fro, with a startled, cunning look; and she used to sit watching her child, when she was at work, with the air of a tigress glaring on her prey. We soon learnt her history, which easily explained these singularities.

She had been one of the slaves of Muhktar, the son of Ali Pasha, Satrap of Jannina, and had consequently passed the greater part of her life in that luxurious palace, overhanging the beautiful lake there, within whose stately walls more deeds of horror and bloodshed have been committed, than ever before perhaps defiled a human habitation. Her days were spent, of course, in the harem, with the other women; and she could tell us little of the incidents of the aged Pasha, of the grey-haired Ali's most sanguinary and eventful life. The women knew nothing of what occurred beyond the limit of their own apartments. It may be, that they often heard the echoes of shrieks dying into ominous silence, or confused sounds which instinct told them was the voice of human suffering; and at dead of night, doubtless, they could distinguish, through their gay dreams, the dull, heavy plash of some unresisting weight sinking into the lake, whose still waters rippled up against the wall beneath their very windows; but with the true Turkish philosophy, in which they were unconscious adepts, they gave little heed to such things, and occupied themselves in the hourly decoration of their persons, and in quarrelling with one another.

The little Katinko was but a few months old, when her wretched mother discovered, to her utter consternation, that a rival slave had accused her to Muhktar of having entered into a conspiracy to poison him.

However unjust the accusation, the unhappy woman knew that her doom was sealed! No one ever lived four-and-twenty hours under suspicion in the palace of Ali

Pasha. The lake and the sack were at hand, and death ever ready to come at the tyrant's beck. She gave herself up for lost. But fortunately one of her brothers was engaged as a soldier in Muhktar's service. He heard of the circumstances just in time, and was determined to save her. Having conveyed to her his intentions, he managed to come that very night, in a little boat, on the lake directly under her window. It was raised to some height above the water; but one who leaves certain death behind, does not shrink from any peril in attempting to escape. She made a rope of the Cashmere shawls which served to gird her waist, and having fastened it securely, she first lowered down her little infant in a basket, and then followed herself, and was received into her brother's arms in perfect safety. In another moment they were skimming the waters with great rapidity, aided by the fresh night breeze. A sleepy sentinel fired a few shots at them, but they succeeded in reaching the opposite shore without injury.

They instantly fled the country, and took refuge in Alexandria, thinking they never could be far enough from their powerful enemies. Since then, the death of Ali, and both his sons, had rendered their poor slave abundantly free; and she returned to Greece, in order to gain a livelihood in her own country, and ultimately to find a husband for her beautiful daughter.

Katinko was more like the most exquisite statue than a human being—the repose of her matchless features, and the marble paleness of her complexion, were quite unequalled. We soon found, however, that she shared in a deficiency common to all inanimate pieces of sculpture, and more general among living beings than we are disposed to admit. The mind, the intellect, that should have illuminated that perfect countenance, existed not, and she

was a very child in capacity and in tastes. Still we took a great interest in her; and our distress was extreme when we discovered, after she had been with us two years, that she had consented to enter on a new line of life very different from that we could have desired for her.

Just at this time, some young men, returning from their colleges in Europe, full of enthusiasm for their country and its departed glory, determined to revive several of the ancient tragedies, and have them performed at the little theatre at Athens.

A *prima donna* was, of course, indispensably requisite, and some one had, most unfortunately, caught a glimpse of Katinko, wandering among the vine walks of our garden, when the evening breeze had lifted from her beautiful face the long folds of the floating veil, which completed her native costume.

She was not proof against the golden offers which were instantly made to induce her to go on the stage, and she left us almost secretly for Athens, where she was to be instructed in her new calling. It was in vain we remonstrated; nothing we could offer could compensate to her ambitious old mother for the delight of seeing her child figuring as a princess or queen, were it but for an hour.

Katinko shed many tears at parting; but nevertheless, she went; and it was the last we saw of her, with her simple, child-like manners, and her picturesque Albanian garments.

About a year after, I was accosted in the street by a young woman in the European dress, whose appearance was decidedly remarkable, from the outrageous violation of all good taste which characterized her attire. Not only was she loaded with feathers and ribbons, but her face was positively masked in paint, applied seemingly without any attempt at concealment! It was actually not until she turned towards me the exquisite profile, which no-

thing could change, that I recognised our once beautiful Katinko!

I believe we should have regretted her far less, had she shared the fate of one of her young companions, who, less singularly lovely, was almost equally celebrated for the extraordinary length and profusion of her beautiful hair.

This poor young girl had been compelled one day to go out during the burning heat of noon upon some very urgent errand, for nothing but the most imperative necessity could induce any one to commit such an imprudence during the summer in Greece. Insanity or death may equally be the consequence, and, in this instance, four-and-twenty hours did not elapse before she was stretched lifeless on her bier!

I shall not easily forget the funeral of the fair young Greek, on that still and lovely summer evening, as she was borne away with the sound of music and the incense of perfumed flowers around her, to her grave, near the banks of the murmuring Illyssus.

There is, as we have remarked, a strange degree of romance connected with the occurrences of every-day life in Greece. Much more, in the most trivial details of their religious or superstitious ceremonies, there is a real poetry, which we might vainly seek in the wildest efforts of imagination.

In their manner of performing the last offices to the dead, there is especially a most touching beauty. The spirit which guides them in the peculiarities of their observances is quite different from that which elsewhere universally inspires the funereal rites.

The Greeks would seem as though their very souls were so imbued with the sunshine and the brightness which is for ever around them in their glowing land, that they must needs drive away all images of gloom, even from the

dark grave, which we hold as the very embodyment of the word, and from the dread closing in of the long night of death.

They do not represent the king of terrors as an armed phantom, in league with corruption to destroy the human frame, by which means men have learnt to shrink from it, as though the soft repose from life's vain struggles which it affords, were anguish! and its deep rest from sorrow and from sin, despair! but rather as a glorious angel that stands at the portals of eternity, and beckons men onward to its joys.

When a soul departs, their lamentations are terrible, but they sorrow for the survivors only!—as for the dead, they count him in all things a conqueror, so they place the laurel garland on his brow, and in his hand the palm of victory! They say that he has conquered, inasmuch as he has triumphed in the last fierce struggle of the death agony, the thought of whose foreseen inevitable pang casts a mysterious shadow over the sunniest hour of our brief existence! But yet more, they hold him a conqueror, because he has triumphed over life itself!—that subtle fluid careering through his veins, which has the power to cause his human heart to sink with misery, his eyes to gush with bitterest tears, and his brow to redden with the flush of shame! All this is over. So they uncover the face, that all may see what a majesty of most serene repose is stamped thereon, and they sing a hymn of thanksgiving as they bear him away to his rest.

I remember when they buried that bright-eyed Greek maiden, snatched suddenly from earth, when her young heart was light as her face was fair, they arrayed her, so rigid and motionless, in the gay dress she had never worn but for some great *fête* or gala, as though this more than any were a day of rejoicing for her, and thus attired, with

her long hair spread out over her still bosom, all decked with flowers, they laid her uncoffined in her grave. At her feet they placed a small flask of wine and a basket of corn, in accordance with an ancient Greek superstition, which supposes that for three days and nights the disembodied spirit lingers mournfully round its tenement of clay, the garment of its mortality, wherein, as a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth, it lived and loved, it sinned and suffered! As soon as the first symptom of decay announces that the curse of corruption is at work, they believe that the purer essence departs to purer realms.

Before the grave was closed, whilst for the last time the warm radiance of the sunset cast a glow like the mockery of life over the marble face of the poor young girl, her friends, as a last precaution, took measures to ascertain that she was actually dead, and not in a swoon.

The means they always take in such instances to ascertain a fact, which elsewhere would be ensured by a doctor's certificate, is touching in the extreme: the person whom, whilst alive, it was known the deceased loved best, the mother, or it may be the young betrothed, who had hoped to place on her head the gay bridal crown, instead of the green laurel garland of death, advances and calls her by her name, repeating after it the word *ella* (come) several times, in a tone of the most passionate entreaty; if she is mute to this appeal, if she is deaf to the voice that was dearest to her on earth, then they no longer doubt that she is dead indeed; they cover up the grave, lift their eyes to the heaven where they believe her to be, for the Greeks do not hold the doctrine of purgatory, and, having made the sign of the cross, they depart in silence to their homes.

But a year after, on the anniversary of the death, they return to the grave, and, kneeling down, lay their lips to

the sod, and whisper to the silent tenant, that they love her still, that she is yet remembered and regretted.

With this last most beautiful and touching observance we do well perhaps to dispense in more civilised countries, where there is so little room for the holy remembrance of the dead, amongst the rapid feverish changes of our busy life. In England, for instance, the bitter words of Hamlet the Dane would seem to have proved prophetical, and a man must, in very deed and truth, build churches to be remembered six months after his death.

Close to the country house, whose distance from any town gave us thus so much opportunity for becoming acquainted with the customs of the peasantry, there stood, half hid by a group of immense olive trees, one of those quaint little deserted chapels, which the graceful Byzantine architecture, and the rich colouring given by time to the cold grey stone, render so very picturesque.

They certainly are singularly beautiful, those ancient, lonely chapels, scattered in such profusion over the whole of Greece, that go where we will, to the most inaccessible mountain or the most desert wild, we still find them crowning the summit of the loftiest cliffs, or appearing in the mouth of a cavern, where they are scarce discernible from the surrounding rocks.

Indeed, we would almost fancy, thus finding them, all dim and deserted, wherever the scenery is most wild and striking, that some great saint, in the days of old, had made a pilgrimage over this fair land, and, seeing how infinitely its great loveliness showed forth the Creator's glory, had erected, at every opening in the landscape, a resting-place, wherein men might piously return thanks.

Now, however, they are in truth silent witnesses to the living faith of the humble, simple-hearted peasantry of Greece; for they hold it a sacred duty to keep the little

silver lamp ever burning before the altar, and although the distance is often very great from the nearest village to the holy building, still, at stated intervals, some one never fails to make a journey to the spot, in order to replenish the oil.

I have more than once met an aged woman wandering on foot, by night, through the most deserted districts, in order to perform this pious office; and in travelling, nothing can be more striking, after having traversed perhaps the dreariest regions, where there is not a trace of human habitations, suddenly to come upon a desolate church, and find the steady light burning within, as though it had been lit by a passing angel for his secret devotions!

There were, however, peculiar circumstances connected with the little church close to our house. It went by the name of the Chapel of Bournaba, and there was a time when the boldest man would hardly have dared to pass it, even in the broad noon-day. It was then the favourite haunt of the famous brigand of that name; he had chosen it as a lurking-place, peculiarly adapted to his purposes, as it stood directly where three roads met, and consequently lay right in the path of the travellers whose goods he coveted, or whose persons he wished to secure, in order to obtain a ransom. When he had reason to think that a prey was at hand, he used to send one of his men to sit by the road-side and watch, whilst he himself retired, like a spider that has prepared its toils, into the dark little chapel, to await the critical moment. The scout would sit carelessly, with his gun lying by his side, and appeared to be pensively contemplating the scenery, till the luckless wayfarers came up; when he speedily pounced upon them, and called out to his chief, who, with the rest of the band, very soon had them laid in a row on the ground, bound hand and foot!

Bournaba was one of the most celebrated of the mountain klefts; but, happily, he was not a poetical brigand —that is, his long and sanguinary career of vice was chequered by none of those startling and generous deeds, those sudden impulses of a noble nature perverted, by which some writers have succeeded in converting a common thief or assassin into a hero. There is nothing so dangerous as the romance and poetry which sometimes colour so falsely the true hideousness of crime, casting a fatal halo round the guilty head of the criminal, till our dazzled eyes can no longer perceive the brand of the murderer upon his brow.

But, fortunately, there was nothing attractive in the vulgar butchery, and still more ignoble stealing, practised by Bournaba with no other motive than his sordid craving for gain; his wanton cruelty rendered his name more terrible throughout Greece than the recollection of the Turks themselves; but I never heard of his displaying any of the reckless gaiety which is supposed to characterise the brigand chief of the stage or the novel, except on one occasion, when he constrained a plethoric old merchant of Tripoliza, so fat that he could hardly move, to dance a "pas-seul" for the amusement of his band.

His daring courage, too, which does indeed seem to have been most remarkable, is hardly worthy of admiration, for when a man has thus bartered his soul for earthly gain, he must needs make merchandise of his existence also, and trade with his life on the chances of each bold speculation. Even this, however, seems to have failed him at the last.

When the government, some years since, took those strong measures for the suppression of brigandage, which have now rendered the country perfectly safe for travelling (notwithstanding the ridiculous stories which are continually fabricated on the subject), Bournaba offered to become the

servant of the state, on condition of a full pardon, and to employ himself henceforward in subduing the brigands whose companion he had been, undertaking to give accurate information as to their haunts and most secret movements. His services in this capacity were too valuable to be dispensed with, his offer was accepted, he became a sort of police-officer, and discharged his duties with the utmost rigour.

It was a base thing thus to turn on those whom he had led on, and perhaps deluded into crime; but probably the bold and terrible robber feared death far more than many a gentle spirit has done, for to him it could only come as the great Avenger, and to others it has so often been as the best of comforters, the tenderest of friends.

It came upon him at last, however, in a most ignoble shape; he was shot dead by a youth whom he had shamefully maltreated, and whose house he had entered to convey him to prison.

There were some singular circumstances connected with the final dispersion of the lingering remnant of Bournaba's troop, which occurred whilst we were in Athens.

For some time after the death of Bournaba, various of his company attempted, at rare intervals, to resume their old practices; but the peasantry, being well aware that the government would powerfully co-operate with them in the suppression of this bold system of thieving, fairly rose in arms against them, and succeeded several times in bringing them captive to Athens.

On each of these occasions, it was determined to make a public example of the criminals, and after having been duly tried, the sentence of death was passed upon them.

The guillotine has been appointed as the instrument of capital punishment in Greece—an ominous precedent, perhaps, in a revolutionary country. The Greeks are by

no means a tender-hearted nation; on the contrary, a careless cruelty is but too much the characteristic of the uneducated classes; but they seem to share by instinct, as it were, in a feeling which now seems in Europe to be growing very general from principle, and that is, a profound horror for the extreme penalty of the law. Shooting and beheading are practices which, in private life, they rather approve of than otherwise, for the gratification of revenge, or for similar purposes; but a legal murder seemed to them an outrage on humanity which they were determined to resist.

When the time appointed for the fulfilment of the sentence arrived, there was invariably an execution, indeed; but on each occasion the victim was the headsman himself; who never failed to perish by the hand of some secret assassin the day before he was to have performed the law's dreadful work.

At last it became quite impossible to procure an executioner; no amount of pay would induce any man to brave certain death. On one occasion, when two unhappy men were condemned to suffer, a great, ferocious-looking negro was the only person who could be found to perform the terrible office, and this he would only consent to do if he was guarded day and night by a body of soldiers.

By this means he was preserved alive till the appointed day; but on reaching the spot, he found that the ropes of the horrible machine were so inextricably entangled, that it was utterly impossible to complete his task. After many attempts, appalled by the cries of the condemned, who entreated to be spared so dreadful a suspense, he declared that he could not succeed, and was ready to renounce the large sum which had been promised to him.

The state of matters being instantly conveyed to the king, whose clemency is one of the least of his many

noble qualities, he at once commuted the sentence of death to that of imprisonment for life, and the rejoicing criminals were conveyed back to their cells, amidst the applauses of the multitude, who went at once in a mass beneath the windows of the palace, that they might give vent to their enthusiastic approval of the arrangement.

It was thought necessary, however, that the dignity of the law should be upheld, and that the country should not remain without an executioner, whose services might at any time be required. They therefore sent to France for an experienced headsman, whose terrible profession they designed to keep concealed, so that his life might not be endangered. But though they offered a salary considerably higher than that received by many of the employés under government, they still found it was no easy matter to discover a man willing to undertake such an office. They might, indeed, have failed altogether, had they not encountered an individual whose history is strangely dramatic, and whom misery—that worst of miseries, the suffering of those we love—had rendered reckless as to the means he adopted for bettering his condition.

He was a Frenchman of the name of Carripèze, and had been reduced by misfortunes, the details of which I do not now recollect, from a respectable station in society, to the greatest poverty, which he had the anguish of sharing with his beautiful wife and his two young daughters.

His education, his former habits, and even his present feelings, would have induced him to turn with loathing from the service they asked of him ; but it is a bitter thing for a husband and father to refuse the bread for which his children and his wife are craving ; and the very best and tenderest feelings of his human nature were

those which nerved his hand to the systematic shedding of human blood. He consented to have himself instructed in the horrible art, and to place himself at the service of the Greek government, on condition that not only his true employment was to be kept secret from those who would wreak their vengeance on him, but that also it was to be strictly concealed from his own family.

It was perhaps the sharpest sting in his miserable lot to feel that those most dear to him on earth would have shrunk from his side in horror, could they have but imagined the nature of the bitter sacrifice he was making for them.

It was agreed that he should take up his abode at Egina, and work regularly as a mechanic, in order to avoid all suspicion of his real trade.

It is a beautiful spot, that classic isle of Egina, reposing all sunny and bright on the swelling bosom of the deep blue sea, like a child that smiles on its mother's breast! Most beautiful, indeed, with its undulating hills of a deep blue hue, and its snow-white solitary fane which it wears like a gem on its brow, and from whence on a clear day (and what day is not clear in Greece?) you may distinguish the far-distant Parthenon; then there is its one lone column, so graceful and white, that stands on the bright sea-shore, and looks in the moonlight like a sheeted ghost, that beckons to some one from over the wave; and it has gardens of palm, and groves of cypress, and deep ravines full of trees and wild flowers, where the nightingales sing all night, and the sunbeams dance on the breast of the stream all day.

Now to the wife and children of the hired headsman this fair isle seemed like a very Eden on earth. They had been snatched, they scarce knew how, from a wretched, poverty-stricken home, when struggling in the iron chains of abject penury; they had been absorbed in all those

miserable details of material want, which more than any thing subdue and wear out the mind; and suddenly they found themselves in this bright island, surrounded by all the luxuries which comparative wealth could procure them, and which were not the less acceptable that they knew not the source from which it was derived. They also found themselves reinstated in that position of society for which their birth and education best fitted them.

Egina was formerly a favourite summer residence of the inhabitants of Athens, till, a hospital for lepers being established there, they were constrained to avoid it. There is still, however, a certain society among the islanders themselves, into which the headsman and his family were received with the most flattering consideration. Strangers are always welcome in Greece, and in this instance the wife was too beautiful, and the daughters too young and gay, not to be the greatest possible acquisition. Soon they became well known and greatly beloved in the island, and one of the young girls was married to the son of the principal proprietor in the place.

But there was one black cloud amid all this sunshine, and that was, the strange blight which seemed to have fallen on the existence of the husband and father, when most it should have seemed sunny and bright. He went about like a man loaded with a burden too heavy for him to bear; some gloomy shadow certainly darkened his soul. If ever a smile quivered on his pale lips, it was like the sickly gleam which precedes a tempest; the tenderness and caresses of his family seemed only to turn his soul to bitterness; he trembled in the embraces of his innocent children, and shuddered when his gentle wife clasped the hand which he had sold to so foul a task!

For a considerable period his services were not required, but his inexorable destiny overtook him at last. A crime

was committed, too revolting to pass unpunished. A man was poisoned by his wife; she was tried and condemned, and a ship of war dispatched with the officers of justice to Egina, to convey Carripèze to the island of Santarin, where the sentence was to be executed.

When they arrived at Egina, the whole population hurried down to the beach, to ascertain the cause of so unusual a visit as that of a government vessel. The officers having landed, asked to be directed to the house of the public executioner. The islanders answered by laughing them to scorn, and declaring that they harboured no such character amongst them. The commanding officer, with a smile, inquired if they did not know a certain Carripèze, and with considerable difficulty succeeded in convincing them that the man they loved and respected was, indeed, the common "bourreau." As the conviction forced itself upon them, one long loud shout of fierce anathemas rose with the name of Carripèze through the air; their horror at having lived on such friendly terms with him, is not to be told. "I shook his hand, his blood-stained hand, this very morning, as if he had been my brother!" exclaimed one. "He lifted my poor child in his arms and kissed it!" shrieked a woman. "But I," exclaimed a young man, positively tearing his hair, "I have taken his daughter to be the wife of my bosom, and the blood of the headsman is flowing in the veins of my children!" Thus lamenting and cursing, the natives followed the officers to the house of the executioner. He was not there at the moment; and when they asked for him by that title, his wife, with horror in her looks, so passionately denied that her beloved husband could have any claim to it, that the people of Egina began to doubt once more.

Just then Carripèze himself appeared; he saw at a glance what was going forward; he knew his doom, and

without a murmur signified to the officers his readiness to accompany them. They surrounded him with a strong guard, otherwise the populace would have torn him to pieces. He took no farewell of his miserable family, nor did he turn to look once again upon his wife; and it was well he did not; for he would have met a glance of bitter scorn that would have stung him to the quick, and taught him that he was never more to look for aught save hate and horror, in the beautiful eyes that could speak love so well.

They took him away—that miserable servant of public justice. His task was soon performed; it was, perhaps, all the easier for the extraordinary conduct of the criminal herself.

She had made a strange law to her conscience, that Hellenic Laffarge, and had found rest to a most guilty soul by substituting one crime for another; she would not abandon the husband whom she seems to have detested, but she murdered him, that, as a widow, she might in all honour take the name of one she had loved in youth.

Her bearing on the scaffold was like that of conscious innocence; she declared she was abundantly ready to die, since her accomplice was to share her fate! As for him, a bold-looking, strong young man, not even the singular daring and composure of the weak woman by his side, could shame him out of his craven heartedness and coward prayers for mercy.

His task performed, Carripèze returned to Egina, to his home. The same powerful guard was in requisition to conduct him to his house, and for greater security they landed at night, for they knew that henceforward the life of Carripèze must hang upon a thread, unless he could shield himself from the certain vengeance of the people of Egina.

When he arrived at the door of his house—his only refuge—the miserable man found it closed against him. Within, there was a sound of weeping and praying; but the wife he had deceived so long, whose love seems to have turned to loathing, persisted in shutting him out from her house, as utterly as she had driven him from her heart! It was in vain he expostulated; but the fact of his arrival had become known, and already the infuriated population might be seen rushing towards him in resistless numbers. He called out to his wife, that his life's blood was about to stain her very threshold, and then her heart melted to the father of her children! She opened the door, and he darted in, whilst the multitude raged round his stronghold, which they were only prevented from burning to the ground by the wish to spare his innocent family.

To what a home had he returned, poor, unhappy man! His wife and children shrunk from his presence as from a baneful thing; whatever room he entered, they abandoned; and though he heard their voices, and saw them close at hand, he was yet more utterly alone, than the loneliest prisoner in his dungeon.

One moonless night, when it was very dark, he stole out of his once dear home, where his presence was a curse, and went to breathe the fresh air on the beach. He had not advanced a hundred yards, when he fell prostrate to the ground, shot right through the heart; with so sure an aim, that he was dead before the shout of exultation, which followed his sudden fall, had burst from the lips of his avengers.

The people had taken it in turns to lie in wait for him behind a certain lofty cypress tree, close to his house; and the two young men beneath whose bullets he fell, considered themselves most fortunate in having been the chosen of destiny for the execution of their purpose.

Such was the fate of the last headsman of Greece, for I am not aware that any such functionary now exists there. Indeed, contrary to the very mistaken notions existent in Europe on the subject, it is an undoubted fact that his services would be less required in that country than in any other where capital punishment is awarded to crime.

Such a statement will with difficulty be credited, for I am aware that the general ideas respecting the state of brigandage in Greece are as erroneous as the newspaper reports on which they are founded. I could give many instances of glaring misrepresentations, and even positive fabrications, which have passed current in England; such as the published statement, that the village in which we were actually resident at the time, had been sacked by robbers, and finally burned to the ground; or that the king's yacht, in which we afterwards enjoyed many a pleasant cruise, had been attacked by pirates, who had set fire to the vessel after they had murdered the crew! But, in fact, the public statistics plainly show that the average of crimes committed in Athens, throughout the year, is decidedly *less* than in any town elsewhere with the same amount of population.

As far as my own experience goes, I can only say that I never saw a brigand *entire* during the whole of our residence in Greece! I once saw the head of one which a peasant was exultingly carrying past the windows on his way to claim his reward from government; he told us that he had found the poor robber wounded severely by a *gens-d'arme*, lying in a wood, and that he had kindly *cured* him.

On another occasion, we imagined we really had found a complete robber, but he proved to be an unoffending shepherd, who earnestly entreated us not to look at his lambs, as he had reason to believe the Inglesi very often had the "evil eye."

We came upon him in rather a startling manner, which induced us to assign so warlike a character to a very peaceable individual.

We were visiting the singular excavation which is called the "prison of Socrates," and which, as a very ancient tradition asserts, is indeed the spot where that wise man of old so calmly delivered up his mortal breath.

It is a large square aperture, in the side of a rock near the Acropolis, and the small dark dungeon within has evidently at some later period been used as a tomb.

It was here, half smothered in the dust, which doubtless was that of human beings long since departed, that we found our shepherd fast asleep, and the singular locality he had chosen for his couch led us to fancy him a less honourable character than he was in reality.

There is one reason why we would willingly suppose that this very ancient chamber in the rock was, in very truth, the scene of the sage's dying agonies, and that is, that nowhere in all Attica, I believe, could he have beheld the sunset, as a more glorious spectacle, than from this spot.

The view over which it casts its departing glory, including a wide range of hill and grove, ocean and plain, is one of the most beautiful that can be imagined; and the scene when the bright day is expiring, is so sublime, that we could well fancy not only that a dying man would wish to linger on the earth, to take his last farewell of it so brightened, but that the very dead would struggle in their tombs to see that sunlight once again!

It were almost worth while to languish through the long, burning summer of Greece, in order to enjoy the delights of its sudden breaking up.

When, after five months of perpetual light, and heat, and stillness, during which nature seems to have sus-

pended her functions in order to slumber in the sunshine, suddenly the eternal smile of the heaven relaxes—the fountain of its tears are opened again, and it weeps once more in its soft pure showers! Then the big drops falling, of that beneficent dew, on the dying trees and the withering flowers, causes the rejoicing earth to exhale such a perfume, as the incense of her gratitude, that the strong aromatic odours almost bewilder the senses; and the sigh, as of a reviving world, breathes fresh through the still hot air. With what joy we listen to the many sweet sounds that had well-nigh grown strange to us, as they waken once again—the rustling of green leaves in the breeze of the morning, the wailing of winds that come laden with clouds, and far off, on the mountains, the lifting up of the voices of torrent and stream, that were hushed while they wasted away beneath the burning glance of the sunbeams, and now rush down through the woods with their songs of gladness, rejoicing in their renovated volume!

Then the great lizards, and the deadly snakes, that lurked near the dwellings of man, fostering their venom in the scorching heat, disappear from the soft, damp ground, and in their stead, great numbers of strange and beautiful birds come, we know not whence, on their rainbow wings, and fill the wide groves with their music!

When this wonderful renovation of nature takes place, it becomes absolutely necessary for us all to quit our summer residences, which are by no means fitted to protect us from the power of the elements in their newly awakened energy.

Before settling in Athens for the winter, it is, however, greatly the custom, to terminate the summer with a ramble on the mountains. That is, with a journey on

horseback, longer or shorter, as patience and strength hold out, during which we may confidently expect every inconvenience, discomfort, and fatigue, to which the body can be subjected; and every delight which can charm the mind, in the shape of beautiful scenery, magnificent weather, and old stirring associations!

It matters little whether we have, or not, a definite object in view at starting—whatever direction we take will assuredly lead us to some time-hallowed spot, or some relic of antiquity, speaking as with a voice from a Pagan world, which in other countries we would make a pilgrimage to see.

Were we but to let the horses wander at will over the purple plain, or through the luxuriant vegetation of the mountain side, we are sure that they would lead us past some tomb, gaping, as though it would call back the ashes stolen from it by the winds, that thrice a thousand years ago were laid in its embrace; or some incomprehensible statue, embodying the untangible thought which gave it birth at a period of which there is no record; or a shattered temple, honouring a false creed, which centuries have expelled from the earth!

It would almost seem as though it must be a sad and a heart-chilling thing, for mortals, the sunshine of whose vapour-like existence a thought can quench, to wander over a land so damp with the dews of departed ages, as this most beautiful Greece! Where all things are redolent of death and destruction; and the very emptiness of the graves is more eloquent of the terrible power of decay, than would have been the voices of the dead men themselves, had they moaned aloud as they mouldered away!

But it is not so. The very lavishness with which the ghost-haunted abyss of the past is opened up to our view, carries the mind beyond the mere perishing of the

insensate clay, to gather the drops of wisdom, distilled from the passing centuries, and learn from the mysterious principle which called on the myriads who have lived and died to pass over this visible earth, and disappear again in the gloom, that there is a tremendous chain of ever renewing, imperishable creation, girding the brink of eternity, whose links may be counted even here, spun out unbroken from generation to generation, and tomb on tomb!

In addition to these higher attractions, however, we always found that our mountain rambles were admirably adapted for gaining a still further insight into the domestic life of the Greek peasantry; and it was rarely that they terminated without an adventure of some kind.

I remember one night that we spent in an Albanian cottage, which was well worth the whole journey, with its other attractions.

We had been wandering about for several days: we had first obeyed that sort of mysterious attraction, which constrains all who have once visited the memory-haunted field of Marathon, to return to it again and again. There is I know not what, of unspeakable charm in that vast plain, so desert, yet so peopled with glorious phantoms, where all day long no sound is heard, save the solemn music of the waves, that seem upon that sunlit shore to be for ever chanting the dirge of a people!—the self-same sounds that must have rung on the ears of the combatants, over the roar and the din of the battle, when they paused in that terrible strife which a world has remembered so well;—and by night, they say that again the songs of the waves are mingled with the neighing of the phantom horses, and the clashing arms of the ghostly warriors!

It is strange how this ancient tradition keeps its place

among the superstitious villagers of Marathon. We passed a night there, perhaps with the tacit hope that we should witness the spectre battle! Although in this, it must be owned, we signally failed, we were amply compensated by the amusement we derived from the manner in which a Prussian gentleman, a friend of ours, thought fit that night to inspect the plain. He dreaded the heat of the day, and he therefore went down to visit the mighty field of Marathon, the great cemetery of departed heroes, in the darkest hour of a moonless night, with his servant carrying a candle before him!

Next day, having watched for a time the peasants catching great horse-leeches on the plain, we went wandering over the trackless mountain in search of a temple consecrated to Nemesis, of whose precise locality we were far from certain. We found it, at last—a few broken columns, of the purest white marble, forming a bright spot among the dark green brushwood. We dared not approach it, however, for the ruins were guarded by a huge, angry snake, that reared its crested head as we approached, and wreathed himself round the pillars, as though to protect them from our touch.

Then we went on a little further, to look at the site of the tomb of Iphigenia, the priestess of Diana, and we decided that it would be hard to find a more lovely or peaceful spot, than that in which the vestal had slept so well for many a century.

After that, we turned our horses' heads in the direction of a certain village, where we hoped to find shelter for the night. We rode on for many hours, through a beautiful wilderness, but lonely and desolate in its beauty, as must have been the fair remains of Iphigenia, the vestal, when she was first laid to rest in her marble tomb. Gradually the air grew fresher, the sky more dark, our horses were

weary, and path there was none! Long before we owned it to each other, we all knew that we had lost our way most completely. We could make no attempt to ascertain where we were, for we were still trying to extricate ourselves from a very forest of myrtle and oleander bushes, when the swift night came down upon us. It fell moonless and starless: scarce was the sun below the horizon, when the sudden darkness came striding over the vault of heaven, like a giant in funereal clothing, devouring the last ruins of light; and soon the gloom was so profound, that we had no resource but to let our horses wander on as their instinct guided them. For once, it failed them altogether—they suddenly stopped, neighing with terror, and we found that they had brought us up to the very edge of a large sheet of water, of whose depth and extent we could form no idea. There seemed now but one alternative, and that was to bivouac for the night upon the spot where we stood. We were ready to fall from our horses with sheer fatigue; and the poor animals themselves had been stumbling recklessly on for the last hour, in a manner which showed they could go no further.

It was not a very pleasant prospect. The ground was damp, and the sky dark with clouds, whilst at no great distance we could hear the jackalls howling lamentably, as though they were particularly hungry. Suddenly, one of the servants gave a joyous exclamation—he perceived a little twinkling light far off. It might be—it must be—a village! Horses and riders started off with renewed courage towards this beacon of hope. Soon the barking of shepherd-dogs announced that our approach was heard; and to our infinite joy, we found ourselves in a few minutes in a wild little Albanian hamlet, with the whole of its very unsophisticated inhabitants crowding round us.

Instantly, when they found how wearied and exhausted we were, there was a great dispute as to who was to have the honour of offering us hospitality. Finally, the right to do so was claimed by the fortunate possessor of the best house in this village of shepherds. He triumphantly led the way to the dwelling, which we were told was so greatly superior to all the others. It was a small building, composed entirely of wood, and consisting of one single apartment. A large fire blazed merrily on a square stone near the top of the room, and the furniture consisted of various sheepskins, spread out on the clay floor as seats. We were invited to take our places on the ground, on one side of the fire, into which a handful of pine cones having been flung, it shot up into bright flames, which cast a strong glare on the strange scene around us. Opposite to us sat our host and his wife, their daughter, a little girl of some fourteen, and her husband, a fine-looking youth of twenty.

Beyond them were our servants, occupied in preparing our supper, and in rubbing down the horses, who had entered by the same door as ourselves, and were to share the same apartment; next to them were an ass and a pig, who were loud in their remonstrances at being thrust so far from the fire, to make way for the new comers; not to speak of the innumerable cocks and hens who perched in the rafters, and flew about amongst us. At the door the whole population of villagers was assembled to gaze at us.

Never before, I believe, had a stranger passed through this remote little hamlet, peopled chiefly by the shepherds, whose flocks were scattered on the mountains around; and the simplicity of their manners, as well as the strange naïvete of the questions they put to us, was quite refreshing.

They wondered greatly at the singular invention by which dollars, in which shape only they had ever before seen silver, were converted into forks and spoons. The air cushions they honestly confessed they believed to be bewitched; and they could by no means understand why we should take the trouble to comb our hair, when doubtless we had performed that ceremony on Easter day.

When our meal was concluded, they desired the crowd at the door to come back in the morning to look at us; then, having lit a small lamp before a blackened print of some holy subject, they performed their evening devotions with much fervour; and having wished us soft slumbers and happy dreams, in the most poetical manner, each one wrapped himself in his sheep-skin and lay down to rest. We had no resource but to endeavour to follow their example, though not even our extreme fatigue could reconcile us to the idea of sleeping in such close contact with the horses and other interesting quadrupeds who formed our family party.

Fourteen hours on horseback is, however, an admirable precedent to a good night's rest; and I really believe we should have slept soundly in spite of all, but for the restlessness of the pig, who was a decided somnambulist, and the braying of the ass in his dreams—a sound which all must be aware is far from melodious under any circumstances; but those who have never had an opportunity of hearing it in a bed-room, can have no idea how overpowering it then appears. The night was short, as we started again at three o'clock on our return home; but it was one never to be forgotten.

It is a gay scene, the first ball at court, which commences the Athenian winter, where the families, who have not so much as heard of each other for the last six months, meet once more to rejoice together that "les grandes

chaleurs" are over at last. It is, however, a scene as peculiar as it is gay.

One of the most striking peculiarities of a residence in Greece, at the present day, is the close proximity into which we are brought with its great Revolution, that noble struggle for independence.

It is true that the long wild strife is over at last, and that all is quiet now. But although the great gaunt Spectre of War has been exorcised and laid to rest, which once stalked, rapacious and fierce, through the length and breadth of the land, still there is not a family, nor scarce an individual, on whom it has not left the mark of its blood-stained fingers, as it dragged on its desolating steps.

So that now a residence in Greece is, in some sense, like a journey over some great plain, where a battle once has been; and where, though now the wild flowers are blooming there in beauty, and the streams are rushing clear, our steps for ever disturb some broken arrow-head, or shattered spear, the fragment of a tattered banner, or it may be some dead warrior's skull.

But it is good to be thus brought into contact with the actual details of the events, that seemed to us so great and glorious, when, afar off, we could only distinguish the flash and the smoke, the roar of the cannon, and the shouts of the conquerors. It is good to analyse the elements which composed the popular movements we admire and approve, and the motives of the heroes we teach our sons to revere!

It is good—because thus we may hope to discern the false glitter with which we have coloured such deeds, as make terrible the death-beds of those who were illustrious by them! and the unsound principles of a world's teaching, to which we have given the high names of honour, self-sacrifice, and fealty.

Among the gay, light-hearted throng which crowds the

reception-rooms of the monarch, it is indeed singular to meet with the most prominent characters of that terrible struggle; and to see the old Palikars, with their iron hands, and their breasts all scarred with the wounds from which they escaped as by a miracle, quietly enjoying the amusement they derive from watching the dancers, and beating time to the merry tunes of waltzes and quadrilles.

Indeed old Colocotroni, the sturdy, dauntless chief, whose fame has reached even England, had very nearly terminated his wild, stirring career within the walls of the dancing-room. He left it alive and well at midnight, and at two in the morning he was dead.

But it is certainly a beautiful scene—that of a ball in the new palace at Athens—the variety of magnificent costumes, and the gathering together of beautiful women, from so many different nations, could scarce fail to render it so. The Capitani, or chiefs, are each a perfect picture, when dressed out in the full splendour of the Greek costume; and their wives and daughters, who, on such occasions, generally carry their whole fortunes on their persons, sometimes wear their red caps, with the tassel, composed entirely of real pearls, while diamonds and other jewels are lavishly disposed on the most conspicuous parts of their dress.

Pre-eminent amongst them all, the fair young queen is distinguished by the perfect grace of her movements and the sweetness of her smile; while the king is eagerly surrounded by all, for, despite of the continual reports to the contrary effect, he is beloved by his people, as he deserves, for his generosity and goodness of heart; though perhaps not even his own subjects have thoroughly appreciated his ceaseless toil and continued self-sacrifice for the

good of the nation, or the patience with which he has continued, uncomplaining, in as difficult a position as a prince was ever placed in, without the aid of one person on whom he dared rely.

The diversity of languages to be heard on these festive occasions is quite singular, and on all sides may be heard the amusing mistakes resulting from the attempts of the natives of the different countries to understand each other;—an Englishman, gravely conversing with the French ambassador on the state of the country, and observing that it must indeed be very difficult to change the clothes of a whole nation, having substituted the word *habits* for *habitudes;* and a Greek, whispering to an English lady whose language he professes to have acquired at Corfu, that he does not think her partner very good bred.

But it were vain to attempt analysing at a glance the whole of our residence on these fair shores, so thickly strewn with fragments from the great wreck of time.

The impression which remains most strongly on the mind, after a residence, not in Greece only, but in the East in general, is a kind of vague feeling, as though in these countries the laws of mind and matter were reversed.

Whilst among the people on the Asiatic shores—so dull, so mindless, so enervated—we find nothing to raise our ideas from the material to the spiritual; it is from the stones and the dust of the ground itself that we may draw the lessons which teach of immortality, and extract the high and elevating thoughts of noble intellects which earth shall know no more.

WAYFARING SKETCHES.

CHAPTER I.

Arrangements made to leave England and start by the Danube—Greece become a hacknied Subject—Its Claims on our Attentions increased in Proportion—Too much already said of this Country in Connexion with the Past—Regular Routine of Enthusiasm performed by Travellers—Present Claims involve the Fate of living Men—Struggles of a young Country—New Institutions—Seminary for Priests—University-Schools—House of Commons—Anecdote of a Mainote.

April 24th, 1845.

THE steamer from Constantinople has just brought the news that the navigation on the Danube has commenced for the season, and that one voyage has already been successfully performed. As this is the route by which we intend proceeding to England, we have therefore arranged to start by the next packet for Smyrna. There remains to us, consequently, but a very few days of our long residence in a country which is daily becoming more interesting in many points of view; although unfortunately it has

at the same time been rendered so much of a hacknied theme, that it no longer attracts all the attention its progress would merit.

Of Greece, as the shrine of classical memory, whose every rock and every hill, barren and desert as they are, must still be eloquent of days so glorious that their fame has traversed unnumbered ages, and outlived the rise and fall of empires—of Greece in connexion with its former greatness—enough has indeed been said already by numerous and often able writers. From the period of Lord Byron's visit to that of the last young collegian who has had the mortification of having his Homeric Greek mistaken for English by the Albanian servant he attempted to converse with, this country has been the favourite resort of innumerable travellers from all parts of the world, but more especially of our own countrymen.

We have seen them flocking to these shores in search of that food for their enthusiasm and their imagination which they deem perhaps their own homes too much devoid of interest, and their lives too rational and matter of fact, to afford them, until the very process of travelling has taught them that no one place is in reality more poetical than another, or more calculated to convey to the mind that great truth stamped on every line of creation, that all things here are destined to decay, that however much our associations would seek to confine it in peculiar localities, the past must still be everywhere bearing its universal testimony to the sure downfall of earthly grandeur, and the perishing of the work of men's hands. For everywhere there has been beauty which has faded, and life which has been swallowed up in death; and still more, everywhere and at all times, human passions are working round us; and the human schemes and hopes and fears springing from the occurrences

of our daily existence, may afford food for reflection as profitable, and of as deep an interest, as aught that this time-honoured land can offer.

But whether these modern pilgrims have been actuated by the restless love of change, or the wish rather to feast their eyes on her visible loveliness than to conjure up the dim visions of her departed glory, very few have failed at least to pay their tribute to all that remains of ancient Greece. The wonderful beauty of her monuments has been described; the strange and deathlike stillness which reigns over the noble plain of Marathon, has been commented on; the desert wildness of Thermopylæ and the profanation of the Castalian fountain poetically regretted; whilst the oracle at Delphi and the spirit of Plato at Sunium, have all been duly invoked. On such matters, therefore, there is nothing more to be said: but Greece has now a claim on our attention just so much higher than the mere interest her ancient fame might excite, as a future which will be influenced by the events of the present day is more important than an irrevocable past, and the fate of generations unborn, who have yet to live and suffer, is of greater moment than the visionary recollections of dead men's deeds.

If the record of these days of old may be read in the striking features of her landscapes, another page of her history has now been written on her breast in every spot which marks the details of that one great struggle whereby so lately she burst her chains, and rose from slavery and dependence to be once more a nation. I do not mean to speak of the attention which her political position might claim, either as regards her own internal interests or those of the countries with which she is connected; but merely of the sympathy with which all must view the efforts of a people so lately awakened from the moral stupor into which they

had been plunged by the tyranny of a foreign yoke, and who, during the few years of their independence, have already made most rapid progress towards civilisation and intellectual improvement. Honour, justice, and loyalty, are no longer only names but principles amongst them; and that deeply-rooted patriotism which led them formerly to shed their blood and risk their lives for their country, now causes them to labour zealously in the reform of abuses, and to promote those means of enlightenment which may ultimately place them on the level with other nations. Of late many important institutions have been established in Greece; her priests are now offered the means of acquiring the instruction necessary to render them at least less ignorant than those whose blind guides they have so long been; and we may yet hope to see her church, which, though obscured by the grossest superstition, has ever kept the true faith as a precious gem in a rough casket, emerging from its comparative darkness as a pure and apostolic branch of the universal Church. The newly-founded university, with its twelve learned and enlightened professors, is doing wonders in spreading knowledge and encouraging the study of the sciences; whilst in the admirable schools springing up in all directions, the men and women of twenty years hence are acquiring sound principles, and a suitable degree of mental cultivation.

Let then the wise and good of more favoured lands still visit regenerated Greece, not merely to expend their eloquence on her broken columns and empty tombs, but to patronize her institutions, to stimulate her advancement in all that is right and needful, to aid, in short, with their counsel and support, this young country so nobly struggling into life.

The House of Commons is now one of the most inte-

resting sights in Athens, although I must own, whenever I have attended any of their debates, I always found the members, or deputies as they are called, so exceedingly picturesque, that I was far too much occupied studying their graceful attitudes and wild costumes to attend to the sense of their very energetic speeches. The President of the National Assembly, Notara, is a picture in himself; he was chosen on account of his age, and certainly on this ground he had the best possible right to his post, as he is 108 years of age, and looks as if he had been dead and buried for the last half century, and had only come to life again for the occasion.

The practical working of the constitutional form of government, which, since the 3rd of September, 1843, has been established in Greece, was rather amusingly illustrated to me by a very original Mainote of my acquaintance. He had made a vow never to shave his beard till Greece was altogether free, which, in the days of her absolute monarchy, he did not consider her to be. On the 3rd of September he said he had almost determined on cutting it off, but he thought he would wait a week or so to see how matters went, "and," he added, shaking his head significantly, "my beard grows longer every day."

We shall not, however, have an opportunity of visiting the Chambers again before we leave Athens, as this is Easter Week (Old Style), when all business is suspended.

CHAPTER II.

Easter Week—Lent rigidly observed—Fête among the Ruins—Preparations for Breaking the Fast—Principal Ceremonies of Holy Week—Holy Thursday—Good Friday—Funeral Procession at Midnight—Ceremony of the Anastasin or Resurrection on Easter Eve—Singular Beauty of the Night in Greece—Striking Scene at the Dawn of Easter Day—State of Religion in Greece not unpromising compared with other Nations—Extraordinary bustle of Easter Day—Frightful Singing of the Greeks—Analogy of the Sister Arts disproved by them—A Jew giving the Lie to the Emperor of Russia.

April 25th.

I AM very glad thus to have an opportunity, just before my departure, of witnessing once more the ceremonies of the Greek Church during the holy week, which are so particularly beautiful. Nowhere, I am certain, is Lent more conscientiously or rigidly kept than in this country; so much so, indeed, that the effects of the discipline, which is carried on in the true spirit of mortification, are physically evident, in most cases, long before the forty days are over: they use the strictest abstinence, and the little food they do eat is of a most unsavoury nature; there are no dainty omelettes and wild duck, passing under the name of fish, as in Roman Catholic countries; vegetables boiled in water, olives, and a certain most horrible species of shell-fish, which it is a penance even to look at, with black coffee, is the sole nourishment they take. But the Greeks are a very light-hearted people, and they enter upon this

severe regimen with one of the gayest and most beautiful of their fêtes.

This is the burying of the carnival, a fantastic ceremony which takes place before twelve o'clock on the first day of Lent. The spot, which from time immemorial has been chosen for its celebration, would alone give an unspeakable charm to this characteristic scene, independent of the invariable accessories of a cloudless sky and a brilliant sun, which the Greeks may at any time so confidently expect, that they wisely hold all their festivities in the open air. The fifteen majestic columns now alone remaining of the mighty temple of Jupiter Olympus, are usually abandoned to a solitude and stillness so intense, that there seems to hang around them a very atmosphere of desolation, which singularly enhances the awful sublimity of these stately ruins; but on this day, before even the rising of the sun has been announced by the long shadows of the three lone pillars which stand apart from the rest, and have so long been as a gigantic sun-dial to that wide plain, the stern silence of this kingdom of the past is broken in upon by every sight and sound that can indicate life most busy, stirring, and gay.

The whole population of Athens, men, women, and children, followed by their asses laden with provisions, carpets, and other indispensable luxuries, pour out of the town at this early hour, and assemble under the deserted columns: nor do they confine themselves to this spot alone, but spread in all directions along the myrtle-clad banks of the Ilyssus, over the stadium, as entire in form to this day as when it shook with the roar of the wild beasts and the shouts of the combatants in those terrific games; and round the classic fountain of Calleroe, usually so still and quiet that the most timid of nymphs might use its limpid waters for her mirror, as the stars do every night.

Thus, clustering in groups that are almost always strikingly picturesque, they establish themselves for a long day of enjoyment; the little infants, strange-looking, diminutive mummies swaddled from head to foot, and with long streaming black hair, are laid among the green corn to sleep or scream as the case may be; the young girls arrange their little coquettish red caps to the best advantage, and look out from under their long eyelashes at the fierce cavaliers, who, with a self-satisfied air, and an incredibly small waist, keep continually careering at full galop up and down, over rocks and stones in a reckless manner, more amusing to themselves than agreeable to their horses. Meanwhile the more sedate of the party seat themselves in a circle, and give their serious attention to one of the number, who either regales them unwearied for hours together with a most lamentable music produced by the rattling of a quill on the jingling wires of a sort of mandolin, or else chants, in a monotonous voice, a never-ending story, which, to my infinite delight, is generally word for word one of those we know so well in the "Arabian Nights." Altogether it would be impossible to conceive a gayer or more animated scene, brightened as it is by the effect of the sunshine on the vivid colours of their dresses.

At noon a grotesque figure, representing the late carnival, is carried to his grave in procession, with a great deal of merriment and glee, where he is ignominiously decapitated and buried. From that moment the Greeks enter with all sincerity on the practice of the severe system of self-denial enjoined by their church, and really so visible are its effects, that before they reach Passion Week, when the abstinence is almost total, a man is liable to be mistaken for his elder brother in the street.

Vigorous preparations now commence for the reaction so shortly to take place, and the town becomes a scene of bustle and excitement quite indescribable. Athens for the last few days has literally been one immense sheep-fold, as it is an inviolate custom that the Pascal lamb should be eaten on Easter Day, even in the very poorest house in Greece, and the voracious looks which are everywhere cast on the still living animals are most amusing—red eggs are also so indispensable to the breaking of this long fast, that the tradespeople seem to lose all recollection of their distinctive callings, and cobblers and blacksmiths alike become merchants of this cherished commodity. Besides these, there is a particular kind of biscuit made only at this season, generally by the mistress of the house herself, be her rank what it may, who taxes her ingenuity in giving them all sorts of fantastic forms. It would appear that some consider this one of the very few safe channels for the expression of their loyalty, as my little nephew has just come in high glee to show us a cake representing their most gracious majesties, each with a red egg under their arm.

The principal ceremonies of the church commence on Holy Thursday, and I determined to attend them all, fatiguing as they are, as it is the last opportunity I may ever have of doing so. The priests begin at eight o'clock in the evening to read in all the churches what is called "Les douze Evangiles," that is all the chapters in the four gospels containing the last events of our Saviour's life. As may be supposed, this lasts many hours, and the fatigue is extreme, since it is a point on which they are particularly tenacious that all should stand while the gospel is being read. When the Protestant chapel was opened in Athens, and the Greeks freely admitted to

witness our services and offer their comments on them, I have often been asked what was the reason of our inconsistency in remaining seated while the second lesson is read, since we rise to hear the shorter portion of the gospel afterwards;—in my ignorance I could not answer the question.

The Greeks enter on these important services at this period, with a zeal and a sincerity which might well be a lesson to many who are so ready to exclaim against their ignorance and superstition. After they have thus heard, crowded into a few hours, that large portion of Scripture, which our Church more wisely enables us to hear at intervals during Lent, they retire to pass the greater part of the night in the prayers appointed to usher in the great solemnity of Good Friday. This day is observed with a devout seriousness, which is quite remarkable. The most perfect stillness pervades the whole town, usually so noisy and animated from the first dawn of light; and the people scarcely leave their houses at all until eight or nine o'clock in the evening, when all who are not detained by some insurmountable obstacle repair to the churches to attend the solemn rites which are then performed.

They consist in a regular funeral service, which certainly brings the awful fact they commemorate most palpably before the mind. A bier, on which there is no profane attempt to represent what never ought to be represented, but simply covered with black draperies, stands before the altar, and numerous tapers are lighted round it, while the rest of the church is left in total darkness; at the head stands the venerable old archbishop, in his long flowing robes, holding the sacred Scriptures; at the foot a bishop, scarcely less aged, supports the cross, and other dignitaries of the Church fill up the vacant space between them, each one

standing motionless, wrapt in the black crape veils which form at all times a part of their attire.

The cathedral is thronged to the very door, though the same scene is enacted in all the other churches, which are equally well filled; yet a deep, almost mournful, silence prevails; not a sound is heard among that mass of living beings, save the low sad voice of these old men, as they chant in a monotonous, but not unmusical tone, the solemn service for the dead; and occasionally the swinging to and fro of the silver censers, rendering the air heavy with incense. Almost all the prayers used in the Greek Church are extremely ancient, and some remarkably beautiful; those appointed for this day are especially so. That with which they commence is very striking—a single voice proclaims, that "He who hung the heavens and the earth in their spheres, hangs to-day on the accursed tree," and proceeds in a strain of positive sublimity. When these have all been recited, there is a momentary pause, and then the funeral procession is marshalled with all the melancholy pomp they can devise. The priests raise the bier on their shoulders; the bishops walk in front, holding the cross, and long poles bearing other sacred symbols which are always carried before the dead. Slowly they proceed down the nave; and when they have crossed the threshold of the church, they burst at once into the sad wailing hymn for the burial of the dead peculiar to this country, which, though not remarkable as a melody, has something so singular, so indescribably mournful in its tones, that, however great may be the distance from which that strange wild music is heard, it must be recognised at once, and brings with it the image of the cold corpse carried through the sunshine, with its livid face and its wreath of flowers. Then the whole concourse of the people pours out and

follows the procession, but quietly and in order, and thus with slow and measured tread, lighted only by the tapers round the bier, they go forth into the dark night, chanting that solemn requiem. Thousands surround and press on them, but all is still, as though each one of these thousands mourned a peculiar friend; they pass along the principal streets, and the few sick or in sorrow, who have remained within their houses, kneel in prayer as the wailing music announces the approach of the sad but quiet train, till the same monotonous sound, dying away on the still night air, tells that it is past; and, finally, in the same order in which it left it, the procession returns to the church, where they replace the bier before the altar, and extinguish the tapers. Here the ceremony terminates for the night, the church is instantly cleared, and left to the profound silence and darkness deemed suitable for the awful period between Good Friday and Easter Day.

We have all experienced repeatedly, the sudden chill which strikes upon the heart when we meet a funeral, however often we may be called upon to do so; for, in truth, we cannot be reconciled with death, do what we will, as long as we are living, loving, and hoping beings. Men have lain down with him side by side on the battle-field, and weaker women have held him in their arms incorporate, in the form they loved the best on earth; but still, wherever the coffined corpse of one we never knew is carried by, we shrink and gasp, and the bell tolling for the meanest and least valued among us, is as the knell of every one who hears it. It may, then, be imagined how deeply impressive is the scene I have described, when, in addition to these more ordinary feelings, we realise the awful thought that it is the Lord of life himself, whom, in this mournful procession we, as it were, are following through the dark and solemn night to the tomb.

Doubtless it is a question, how far it may not be injurious to the mind, that religious feelings should be roused, or impression made, by means of any such outward ceremony; yet, in the case of the Greek people, I should imagine it would be productive only of good. Their faith, simple and childlike, honestly accepting all their Church would have them believe, has, it must be owned, but little of a spiritual nature, at least as yet; and it may, therefore, be as well that their lively imaginations and quick feelings should be worked upon in this manner.

The next ceremony is that of the "Anastasin," or Resurrection, by far the most striking of all those celebrated by the Greek Church; and as it is principally performed in the open air, I watched with some anxiety the prospect of a fine night, on which its effect greatly depends. Happily any one who resides in Greece is tempted to abandon the theory, that human hopes are liable to disappointment, at least as far as regards the weather; so certain is he, if he wishes for a fine day, to see it arrive smiling and warm; not a vacillating, deceitful fine day, such as in England sometimes tempts out an unwary pleasure-hunter, seemingly for the express purpose of maliciously deluging him half an hour after with unexpected rain, but a day indisputably fine, with a sunshine so determinately strong, that it is evident no cloud could have the power to extinguish one single ray. And Easter Eve was as gloriously starry and cloudless as could have been desired.

It is, indeed, a wonderful thing, a summer's night in Greece, or rather the space between the setting and rising of the sun, for it cannot be called night where there is no darkness, no chilling dews, no sleep. People sleep during the hot languid hours of the day, and they are thankful to wake, that they may revive under the delicious

influence of the faint night-breezes, so mild, so soft, that they seem to be but the gentle breathing of the earth in its slumber; we cannot call it night, but yet it is not day, though the whole heavens are glowing with the intense brightness of the great stars, hanging so motionless in the unfathomable depths of dark unclouded blue, and the very air is filled with light from innumerable meteors shooting to and fro. It is not day, for there is a solemn, a profound repose, which day could never know; the very spirit of rest seems to go forth over the earth, hushing, not only winds and waves, but causing every leaf on the sombre olive-trees or green myrtle-bushes to lie still, as though spell-bound; and the starlight, radiant as it is, has a softness which tempers all on the wide-spreading landscape, that might be harsh or abrupt in a more glaring light. Wherever it may be seen, a calm summer's night is assuredly one of the most beautiful things in nature; but there is something peculiar in the influence it has on the mind in Greece, which I have nowhere else experienced; there is such purity in the sky, the air, the light, such a holy tranquillity on all around, that the strife of human life seems suddenly stilled, the fire of human passion quenched, and the most perturbed of spirits could not fail to partake somewhat of so intense a rest.

Saturday gave promise of just such a night as this, and at nine o'clock we proceeded down the principal street on our way to the cathedral, where were already assembled not only the whole population of the town, but that of the neighbouring villages also, who always repair to Athens for this solemnity. A platform had been erected at a short distance from the church door, where the king and queen, with the bishops and other priests stand during the latter part of the ceremony. When we arrived they were still

in the church, which was filled just as it had been the night before. Outside, the crowd was dense, and we obtained places on a balcony directly opposite to the cathedral, from whence we witnessed one of the most striking spectacles I have ever beheld.

Still continuing to follow the great events of Passion Week in their solemn rotation, the Saviour was yet supposed to be within his tomb, and the same perfect stillness was maintained, the same darkness and gloom prevailed over every thing. There was not a light, not a sound; each individual of that immense multitude, filling even all the adjoining streets, remained still and motionless, so that even the most distant might catch the murmuring voices of the priests, who were reciting the service within the church; troops lined the streets to see that perfect quiet was maintained, but assuredly it was a needless precaution, for there was not one present who did not seem to share in a general feeling of gloom and depression, as though a heavy cloud were hanging over all things; and so complete was the realisation of all that these ceremonies are intended to convey, that I am certain the power of death, still so awfully manifest in these last tedious hours, was present with each one of them.

As midnight approached, the archbishop, with his priests, accompanied by the king and queen, left the church and stationed themselves on the platform, which was raised considerably from the ground, so that they were distinctly seen by the people. Every one now remained in breathless expectation, holding their unlighted tapers in readiness when the glad moment should arrive, while the priests still continued murmuring their melancholy chant in a low half-whisper. Suddenly a single report of a cannon announced that twelve o'clock had struck, and that Easter Day had begun; then the

old archbishop, elevating the cross, exclaimed in a loud, exulting tone, "Christos anesti," "Christ is risen!" and instantly every single individual of all that host took up the cry, and the vast multitude broke through and dispelled for ever the intense and mournful silence which they had maintained so long, with one spontaneous shout of indescribable joy and triumph, "Christ is risen," "Christ is risen." At the same moment the oppressive darkness was succeeded by a blaze of light from thousands of tapers, which, communicating one from another, seemed to send streams of fire in all directions, rendering the minutest objects distinctly visible, and casting the most vivid glow on the expressive faces, full of exultation, of the rejoicing crowd; bands of music struck up their gayest strains; the roll of the drums through the town, and further on the pealing of the cannon, announced far and near these glad tidings of great joy; while from hill and plain, from the sea-shore and the far olive grove, rocket after rocket ascending to the clear sky, answered back with their mute eloquence that Christ is risen indeed, and told of other tongues that were repeating those blessed words, and other hearts that leapt for joy; everywhere men clasped each other's hands, and congratulated one another, and embraced with countenances beaming with delight, as though to each one separately some wonderful happiness had been proclaimed; and so in truth it was;—and all the while, rising above the mingling of many sounds, each one of which was a sound of gladness, the aged priests were distinctly heard chanting forth a glorious old hymn of victory, in tones so loud and clear, that they seemed to have regained their youth and strength to tell the world how "Christ is risen from the dead, having trampled death beneath his feet, and henceforth the entombed have everlasting life."

It is impossible to give any adequate idea of the effect of this scene. The sudden change of silent sorrow and darkness to an almost delirious joy and a startling blaze of light spreading its unwonted brilliancy widely through the dim shadowy night, was really like magic—the enthusiasm of the fiery Greeks is easily roused, and whether in this instance the feelings they express are genuine or not I cannot say, yet certainly no outward demonstration was wanting of the grateful transport with which the dawning of Easter Day ought everywhere to be met.

The service was now over, and their majesties took their departure. The queen, who on ordinary occasions is merely a pretty woman, looked truly beautiful in her Greek dress, and by the strong light of the torch-light.

We returned home through the streets illuminated as in broad day, and thronged by the people, who seemed to have not the smallest intention of going home to bed; their sole object was evidently to make as much noise as they could in every possible way, and most merrily, if not musically did they sing and shout and send up rockets and fire off their pistols. Even the lambs were already being roasted whole, and the red eggs, with which the town had actually swarmed a few hours before, had disappeared as suddenly as a cloud of locusts in a north wind. Yet it is much to their credit, that this night, when so much licence is given to mirth and revelry, should never have been known to be profaned by excess or intemperance of any kind.

Altogether I think the impression left on the mind by these ceremonies cannot but be favourable to the Greeks and their church; surely more is said of their ignorance and superstition than is altogether just. It would be strange, indeed, if these evils did not, to a certain extent, prevail in a country scarce twenty years escaped from

bondage, under a nation whose own creed is so utterly false and degraded, but the spirit of superstition does not consist in any peculiar observance or rite, and there may be quite as much of it even in England influencing the person who would exalt the observance of some outward form above the virtue of Christian charity, as in the case of the poor old Greek woman, who spends her last penny to buy a taper, which she lights before the altar, and verily believes she shall find her sick child restored to health in consequence. Without, however, attempting to make any comparison with Great Britain, which all must gratefully acknowledge to be so highly favoured as the seat of more true spiritual religion than any country in Europe, it may be said with truth, that the present state of Greece seems, in this respect at least, more promising than that of several others of the European nations. Greece can only advance from her superstition to enlightenment; whereas it is to be feared the mysticism of Germany is but the high road to that infidelity, to which France has already attained; and where is a more mournful spectacle to be found than the moral condition of Italy.

April 26th.

I should not advise any one whose nerves are not very strong, to attempt passing Easter Sunday in Athens. The noise consisting of a confusion of the most discordant sounds, is really tremendous, a strange contrast to the quiet of the past week, and all the more from the complete cessation of the only sound which was then to be heard, namely, the bleating of innumerable lambs; *they* have been most effectually silenced, the very bones have been too well picked to cry out for vengeance; but drums, mandolins, and other inharmonious instruments, rockets, musket

shots, and above all the incessant vocalism, for I dare not call it singing, of the Greeks, combined to render the uproar quite intolerable.

It has been said that there is an invisible connecting link between the sister arts of music, poetry, and painting, and that a sort of analogy may be traced through the productions of genius in these different fields, so that the distinctive character or peculiar turn of thought, which rendered the poet unique in his own calling, may yet be perfectly recognised in the inspirations of the painter or musician. Thus Michael Angelo is the Dante of painting, the composer of Don Juan that of music. Moore is assuredly the Claude Lorrain of poetry, and Bellini the Petrarch of song. Now there can be no doubt that this pretty theory is most thoroughly overthrown in Greece. Not only do the relics of antiquity, and the writings of the ancients bear testimony to their former excellence, almost beyond our comprehension, in poetry and sculpture, but in the present day their new created literature teems with the works of young poets, giving evidence of the most rare talent; and at the Polytechnic School the singularly rapid progress of the pupils, both in drawing and sculpture, has created much surprise. But with regard to music, I really think there is an organic deficiency in the case of each individual Greek. It is impossible for them rightly to intonate the most simple strain, their ideas of an air are fearfully vague; singing in tune is a mystery they have never dreamt of solving; and yet, true to that great principle in human nature, which makes people always persist in attempting precisely what they cannot do, there is nothing a Greek performs more to his own satisfaction, or delights in so much as singing; right bravely does he commence on the falsest of keys, and in the most nasal of tones, an unearthly shake of wonderful

length, which dies away into a whining chromatic scale that is horribly melancholy; then digging out, as it were, his voice from the very depths of his chest, he ascends, by some inconceivably discordant process, to its highest pitch, and there yells without intermission till quite exhausted. As all are equally proficient in this fiend-like and difficult music, it may be imagined with what sort of a concert we were regaled throughout the whole of Easter Day; and yet they all looked so gay and good-humoured, sauntering about in their very handsomest dresses, that one could not but forgive them for expressing their pleasure in their own discordant manner.

On all sides the joyous "Christos anesti" was to be heard incessantly repeated, as it is customary for all who meet to interchange this salutation without distinction of rank or station. A singular circumstance with regard to this practice was related to me as having occurred at St. Petersburgh this year, but I really think the story was too good to be true. It is said that the Emperor of Russia when entering his carriage on Easter Day, addressed the sentinel who presented arms to him with the usual announcement, "Christ is risen," "It is not true," exclaimed the soldier, who happened to be a Jew. I should greatly doubt, however, from what I have seen of Russian discipline in this country, that any one of those poor bondsmen, both in soul and body, would have courage to utter such a speech even in defence of their own religion.

CHAPTER III.

Easter Visits—Farewell Visit to the Bey of Maina—Some Passages in his Life—He is made to witness his Son's Execution—His present Cheerfulness—His Clansmen—The Protestant Chapel—The Burial Place—Strange Meeting of the Dead of many Nations—Travelling before Sun-rise in Greece—Some Account of an Albanian Village—The Domestic Life of its Inhabitants—The School under the Olive Tree—Encounter with a Murderer—The Fratricide's Story—Return to Athens by Night.

THE principal business of Easter Day consists in paying visits; the houses seem actually to change owners, and it is quite alarming to think what a course of sweetmeats and pipes one individual goes through in his progress from dwelling to dwelling; but in this respect they are quite indefatigable. We had also a farewell visit to make to one of the most interesting personages in Greece, who, independent of his personal history, tragic as it is, would be worthy of attention were it only as one of the last representatives of a race that is but too rapidly passing away; yes, they are dying out, those brave old palikari, who with their good right hands alone hewed off their country's chains; the hands are withered now, where they are not already crumbling into ashes. Like the few stalwart trees resisting the rushing storm that lays the forest low, they only remained standing when the revolution swept over the land and laid her warriors in the dust, but the age is hurrying on, and we go with it, and even in Greece the

names of Zaimi, and Colocotroni, and Botzaris, are receding into the past, as the rocks and stones into the distance before the flying wheels of the chariot.

Petrobey, the good old Bey of Maina, has lived to see the most of his comrades in arms depart to answer a sterner call than ever brought them to the battle field, conquered at last by the very power they once used against their enemies. He has lived on after a stirring and eventful life to a cheerful old age, yet he must have fearful recollections, too, that simple, kind-hearted, noble old man; there has been *one* hour in his life whose memory must surely blot out and obscure all other happier moments in his existence. It is that in which he was brought before the narrow window of his prison by the gaolers, and forced to look down upon his brave and beautiful son, the "light of his eyes" as he called him (and yet not less, alas! the assassin of the President Cappo d'Istria), as he came forth with firm step and dauntless eye, to perish in all the strength and beauty of his manhood, by the hands of the common executioners.

The father, uttering no word to betray his inward agony to the tormentors who could condemn him to so unnatural a torture, was doomed to follow all the details of this horrible scene, even to the last, with that fascinated gaze which could not choose but rivet itself on the very sight that was rending his heart. He saw George Mavromicali, universally acknowledged to have been as gallant and noble a young man as ever trod the earth, and remarkable for his personal beauty, come forth surrounded by the soldiers, whose muskets were already loaded to take from that beloved son the life which he had given him. As they passed under the windows of the prison, the young man looked up, and their eyes met; the distance between them was too great to

admit of more than an interchange of looks, but the father stretched out his arms through the narrow bars to show how he yearned to twine them round the form about to be delivered up to the embrace of death, and the son lifted up his beautiful countenance, glowing with ardour and enthusiasm, and answered him with a fond, sweet smile, so that there was far more eloquence in that voiceless farewell than words could ever have conveyed.

Then Petrobey saw him pass on and stand in the open space reserved for him; he heard him address the crowd with quiet cheerfulness, telling them how willingly he died in the cause of liberty; and finally, raising his eyes, which seemed to reflect the serenity of that blue sky, to the smiling heaven, he uttered a prayer for his dear country so touchingly beautiful, that not one could hear it unmoved; even from the stern breasts of the hardy soldiers deep sobs were heard to burst, but the father wept not a tear, not even when, rending the still sunny air, the pealing volley did its work of death, and the child of his love, a moment before so full of life and spirit, sunk down a mangled corpse. Poor old man! I could not help thinking to-day, as I sat by his side, how often in the silence of night, the mournful accents of his murdered son's last prayer must seem to rise upon his ear; how often through his eyes, closed in troubled sleep, must flash that smile which, like the last ray of the sun about to set in night, beamed on the fair face that so soon was darkened in death.

Surely of all sad things in this world of misery and crime, there is none more sad than the shedding of generous blood, the wasting of heroism and self-devotion in a mistaken cause. Where men love not their lives, and go undaunted to torture or to death, as did this noble young man, for the sake of their religion, it is well! the blood

of the martyrs has been as the waters of regeneration, purifying this earth, and causing it to bear much fruit in goodly plants, that shall hereafter bloom in Paradise; precious is indeed the blood of these saints! but when any motive purely political, or, as in this instance, of enthusiastic patriotism, induces one man to take the life of another, however much of nobleness of purpose, even of singleness of heart, there may be, murder is murder still, and the assassin but an assassin, though his becoming so was an act of heroic self-sacrifice.

Petrobey has never altogether recovered the use of his limbs since the imprisonment he underwent at this period, because he also loved his country all too well. He had been confined in a damp dungeon so near the sea on whose shore the town of Nauplia stands, that it was half full of water, and he has ever since been afflicted with rheumatism. We found him sitting cross-legged on his couch, supported by cushions, and quietly smoking his pipe. His long snowy beard now gives him a most venerable appearance, but with all the mild benevolence of his countenance, it suffices but to speak of Maina, more peculiarly his own country, and the scene of his early exploits, to see his eye kindle with a fire that at once betrays the daring old warrior. Madame Mavromicali, who, like a good Greek wife, quietly owns her inferiority to her lord and master, was seated on the ground at his feet, nor could I induce her to leave her carpet for a more elevated position. The bey conversed with us for a long time most cheerfully. He takes a lively interest in all that is going on, and told me that it was a source of deep regret to him that he was prevented attending the National Assembly, from the weakness of his limbs. He talks much of his own province

of Maina, whose welfare he has so greatly at heart. He said that he would die in peace if he could but see a school established there, and begged us to endeavour in our rich and generous country, as he termed Great Britain, to procure him some assistance to this end.

We were quite sorry to leave this fine old man; it is always sad to bid farewell to those whose years have brought them to the grave's dark brink; we may so reasonably fear, if we do but turn away our eyes from them a little while, they shall be swallowed up, and we behold them no more. As we came down the stairs, we were saluted by the numberless dependents of the bey, or rather, I should call them his clansmen, for he stands just in the same relation to them as a Highland chief does to his people. The Mavromicalis were, and, indeed, are the most powerful family of their province, and are greatly respected and beloved in Maina—they themselves, from the old bey down to his beautiful grand-daughter, the queen's maid of honour, are each in their distinctive position the most perfect types of the true Greek aristocracy, and to great simplicity of manner they unite all the refinement of mind and delicacy of feeling which always must accompany gentle blood to a certain degree, whether cultivated by education or not.

This day terminated for us in a last attendance on the service at the little Protestant chapel of Athens. The English residents in this town are singularly favoured in having the services of their church regularly carried on throughout the year in this beautiful little place of worship, with a propriety I have nowhere seen equalled on the continent. It is a strange and pleasing thought, when, in that far distant corner of the earth, the scanty congregation lift up their voices in the petitions of the Litany, to remember

that at the same moment the same words are bursting from the innumerable temples of our fatherland, and echoing over the quiet graves of those who uttered the selfsame prayer in years and ages long gone by, repeating with their living lips what our living lips repeat to-day, "grant us thy peace," and now they are so still, we know they have attained it, and so shall we. The Protestant burial-ground lately consecrated by the Bishop of Gibraltar, is at some little distance from the church; and though not distinguished by any picturesque beauty, is as holy and quiet a spot as ever a weary man might wish to see wherein to lay him down and take his rest. It is a small enclosure in a deserted part of the plain, on the banks of the Illysus, near to the desolate columns of the temple of Jupiter—its gateway, closed merely by wide iron rails, faces the west, and when the setting sun has bathed the sky behind in a flood of golden light, it is wondrously like what imagination pictures as the gate of Paradise. Within, the graves are not very numerous, but each one tells a melancholy story.

In the old churchyards of England one may often trace a family from generation to generation, whose members one after another have come to take their place among their kindred dust, and slumber side by side—the son has buried the father there, and then gone forth to play his little part in the busy drama of life, till in his turn his sorrowing child has borne him back to moulder at the mouldering parent's feet—the daughter in her hours of sadness has gone thither to look upon the mother's tomb, and realise the soothing thought that she shall lay her aching head once more upon the breast that pillowed her in infancy, nor feel its lifelessness, because her own shall be as cold and still. But the case is very different in the

little burial-place of Athens; that tranquil spot has only gathered to its rest the scattered wanderers from home and family. The lonely man, travelling perhaps to escape the memory of some heavy affliction, has been arrested here to meet a deeper oblivion than he looked for. The little child that has drooped and died under the hot eastern sun, has exchanged its cradle for this soft green couch, and the bereaved parents have gone on to their distant home, mourning and in heaviness; or the sailor-boy, whose mother has wept and trembled when the wind howled round her dwelling, and little dreamt some deadly fever had already brought her child to a haven where the storms of life could threaten him no more. Such as these are the sleepers who have met together to slumber here: they knew not one another—they had never heard each other's names, but from far and near, from the north and the south they have come, the stranger dead, upon their various errands, and here has their course been stayed, and now they have lain them down like members of one family, in one common home.

April 27th.

Travelling in Greece is doubtless a very different thing from what it is in England; yet I question, with all the miraculous power we there possess of flying in a very comfortable arm-chair from one end of the land to the other, if all the convenience of railways and steamboats can rival the charm to be found in the more primitive mode of proceeding on horseback, tedious and often difficult as it is. I am sure no one who has once enjoyed it, would barter the first hour before sunrise of a journey in this country, for a whole week of more convenient travelling elsewhere; later in the day it is a different

matter. The hot sun, dangerous paths, and fatigue may perhaps lead us to sigh for comforts not to be procured. We are not as it were so young as in the morning; when mounted on a vigorous, sure-footed Turkish horse, with the first dawn of day, some glorious landscape, half in light, half in shade, invites us to explore its mountains and ravines. At that early hour the sky is so deliciously pure, from whose cloudless depths the thin veil of darkness is floating away, and where the most etherial of stars, more beautiful because the last, is waxing paler and paler as though with terror at the swift coming of the fierce sun—the distant hills look so lovely as the soft blush of morning mantles over them like the warm blood over a fair young face—the sea-breeze comes up from the unseen ocean with an invigorating freshness stolen from the waves, that leads us almost to fancy it bears with it the echo of their song—and there is a joyousness in all nature, and an elasticity in the air, which I think would lift the load from the heaviest of hearts for a time at least.

And all feel this cheering influence—the horses prance and snuff up the cool air, and toss about the silken tassels of their Turkish bridles—even the baggage-mule, more than half smothered under innumerable cushions and coverlids, the bedding, in short, of the whole party, begins capering and flinging out his heels, much to the discomfiture of the cook, who is perched on the top, with about three feet between him and the back of his steed. Then a stirrup-cup of steaming Turkish coffee is swallowed, the light-footed youth whose business is to run alongside and prepare the indispensable pipes, darts on before, singing gaily as he bounds along the rocky path, and the whole cavalcade sets off spontaneously at a quick, exhilarating gallop. This is very delightful, and it is the scene which invariably takes

place at starting; but I must own that the next pleasurable sensation is some hours later, when by a sharp turn in the path, or a sudden descent, we come unexpectedly on a mountain shepherd leading his sheep, in search of pasture, who meekly follow when they hear his voice, in beautiful exemplification of Scripture.

The sun is by this time pouring down upon us the full power of his flaming rays. The stones which actually pave the difficult path are so hot that we cannot touch them, and our eyes ache with the vivid glare. But the shepherd knows well how parched our lips must be. He unslings a large, flat, wooden bottle, which hangs by a leathern strap at his side, and offers it to us full of cool, sweet milk. What a draught it is! and how sorrowfully we look after the little flock, from whom we have much to learn, as they quietly follow their master step by step, wherever he goes! Such a day's travelling as this is indeed a perfect illustration of our journey through the wilderness of this world. We are very children in gaiety of heart in the morning, but too soon our spirits droop, and we long for rest and cooling shades. Thus, in the noon of existence, the fire of human passions dries up the freshness of the mind, and the insatiable burning of an ill-directed yearning torments us with a raging thirst for earthly happiness and most vain joys. It were well, indeed, if in sober reality we practically followed out the simile, and ere the night close in let fall the tears of repentance to be like evening's healing dews.

To-day, however, we did not intend to take a journey long enough to bring the hour of disenchantment; we wished before our departure to visit once again the village near which we had resided during several summers, whose very unsophisticated inhabitants were all our acquaintances, many of them really friends, but it was at a distance of

only seven miles from Athens, and the ride of an hour or two brought us to it.

The serene face of heaven looks down on few more pleasant things on this fair earth, than a quiet Albanian village embosomed in the heart of a deep olive grove, like a bird in its nest, the humble home of simple-minded, happy beings. It is now so difficult to find repose and peace in connexion with human beings; deserts there are clothed in voiceless majesty, because their solitude is filled with the presence of the Creator, and wild terrific spots where nature wraps herself in tempests, and wreaths the clouds and mists around the inaccessible hills, that no profane eye of man may feast upon their savage beauty, and there is ever the mighty sea, where man would fain establish his dominion, and still she repels him from her breast, and chafes round his puny vessel, and takes no rest till by wind and wave she has driven him on and regained her own vast loneliness. But it is daily becoming more rare to find rest and quiet among the haunts of men; contented ignorance, uncomplaining, cheerful poverty, still monotonous lives, which desire no change, and look not (with instinctive resignation) beyond their allotted sphere.

The world is growing old, and men are wise and crafty now in their very youth. This at least have they learned from the experience left them by the swift rushing ages, that their time is short upon this visible abode; and they would fain live much within their little span, and know all things, and penetrate the hidden recesses of the earth, dragging up to the light the secret things of science, and spreading their knowledge and their learning far and near; soon there will be few spots upon this earth where civilisation, too often but another word for corruption, has not penetrated, but the Albanian village is still a tranquil resting-place upon this

busy globe, whose humble inhabitants, if they live and die in darkness and ignorance, have at least no false lights to mislead them, nor sparkling hopes and dreams to rouse their powers, and with them the passions that lie dormant till extinct.

It lies ever basking in the sunshine with its vine-clad cottages and rustic church, holding no communication with the world, no voices are heard from without, no strife or turmoil is within. The little population vary not in their calm routine of existence. They live, they labour, and they die! In the kindly ties of nature is their happiness, in their daily toil the occupation of their thoughts and mind. When the long burning day is over, they collect at the doors of their humble homes, or in the open space, through which flows the clear stream, whose precious waters, their most valuable property, belong to each in turn for two or three hours. The old men sit dreamingly smoking, listening to the gay conversation of their wives, or the merry shouts of the black-eyed children who are rolling in the dust at their feet; whilst round the old fountain of massive stone are grouped the graceful maidens, who come with the sunset to draw water for the next day's use. Their peculiar dress, the veil so classically folded round their heads, and their motionless attitudes as they hold the antique vases to be filled, give them a statue-like appearance, which seems almost to realise our dreams of the days of old.

But on approaching a little nearer, the beautiful statues warm into life, and prove themselves very women as they talk softly to each other. One raises her sleepy eyes with a look of triumph on her companions, and tells them how, when the next vintage is over, her young betrothed, whom she has never seen, is to come down from his mountain village to take her back to his home; and that he has a house and

vineyard, and a hundred olive-trees; and then another whispers aside it is no wonder Caliope should have a rich and handsome husband, for her mother has meekly offered a wax taper at the altar for a year past, to procure her one; and for her part, she doubts not she will soon be asked in marriage also, when her father shall have accomplished the number of forty bee-hives, which he means to give her as a portion; and thus they murmur in their liquid Romaic till the vesper-bell calls all parties to the little chapel. The church is poor and rudely built, the priest is but one from among themselves—scarce less ignorant—too truly, perhaps, a blind leader of the blind. But the bell never fails to sound; daily, with assiduous care, the lamps which burn round the humble altar, are fed with the best oil from their own stores, and their simple devotions regularly performed :—if they have little understanding of them, they have at least the merit of reverence and sincerity.

There was not, however, even thus much of life and human passions abroad in the village of M—— as we rode through it on this sultry morning ; the men were at work in the fields, and the women occupied in their cottages, with their household matters, principally in spinning the rough material which forms their winter garments, and preparing the provisions which would be required at the same period; laying out the ripe figs on mattings in the sun, hanging up the golden bunches of Indian corn, and clearing the olives before they underwent the process by which their oil is extracted. In one spot only some little stir and animation prevailed, and most pleasing was the picture it presented. Beneath the wide-spreading branches of an olive-tree, so large as to afford a shade, impervious to the rays even of that burning sun, sat the good old village

priest in his dark and simple robes, with a great copy, evidently very ancient, of the Greek Testament on his knees. Gathered on the ground at his feet, their quick, intelligent eyes fixed on him, and beaming with that desire for knowledge which is so natural to the Greeks, were some fifteen or twenty children, whom he was instructing with much zeal and patience. Our appearance was of course fatal to the attention which the pupils in this primitive school thought proper to bestow on their master; but the old man was anxious to show us that he was not always so unsuccessful, and he desired a little boy who sat close to his knee, to read aloud a passage from Scripture. I could not help thinking of St. Paul, brought up at the feet of Gameliel, which his position seemed to illustrate as the child rose. His flowing hair, carefully preserved at its full length, proclaimed him a neophyte, or future candidate for priest's orders; and his countenance had much quiet seriousness, which seemed scarce suited to his age. He read with the most perfect fluency a few verses from one of the gospels in ancient Greek.

As we left this very rural university, we met an individual in the street whom we were not surprised to see thus stalking about listlessly in the dangerous heat and glare of noon, for we knew that he was one of those men for whom the flaming sunshine or the cool moonlight were alike, since wherever he went the shadow of an awful crime was cast before him on his path by the light of his own sleepless conscience. It is strange that the fearful curse of Cain would seem to be self-imposed by most of those who have committed the same crime; and this man is assuredly a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth, solely, as it were, by the retribution of his own

will. The details of his history are well-known, and very striking.

Long ago, when the Turks were still in quiet possession of the country, he lived in this village with his father and his only sister. The old man was very aged; and to the instinctive hatred which the Greeks seem at all times to have felt towards these their bitter enemies, he added all the rancour, which a long life of compulsive submission to an abhorred yoke and to continued insult could not fail to produce. His son shared these feelings with all the strength of a fierce, proud spirit; not so his daughter, the gentle gazelle-eyed Daphné. Doubtless, like a true Greek, she deplored her country's slavery, and her Helenic blood boiled within her when her father had to crouch before a detested tyrant, or she herself to shrink trembling from some fierce Moslem's gaze; but the eyes of the young Achmet, the only son of the village Aga, were very mild and gentle; they never turned on her but with a gaze both eloquent and timid—*his* voice at least was soft and low, and that voice had told her that he loved her better than any thing on earth; and Daphné, though she knew that to love him was to love persecution and misery and death perhaps, yet learned to feel for him so deep and passionate a tenderness, that country, father, friends, and home, all lost their hold on her young heart, and left him reigning there alone.

Not less profound was the attachment felt for her by the young Moslem; but carefully, in trembling, did they conceal it from all eyes, knowing too well that the disclosure would probably insure their mutual destruction—for Daphné had but to look on that vindictive old man, and stern, unyielding brother, to feel sure they never would allow

their blood to flow unarrested in the veins of one allied to their country's foe.

The young lovers succeeded, however, in keeping their attachment secret, till they found means to bring matters to a crisis. Some suspicions had, it appears, long rankled in the mind of the son, but the father himself had never dreamt that a few soft whispered words had made his child already a renegade to her country, till one fatal morning, when he called for her as usual, to bring him his pipe when he rose, and for the first time was unanswered. When this seemingly trifling circumstance occurred, her brother who was seated beside him, started up as though moved by some strong impulse, and flew into the inner room, where she ought to have been, but he found that she was not there. It required but a moment to complete his search, still ineffectual, round the little garden and vineyard, whose limits she had never dared to pass before, and he then returned to his father's presence to announce her disappearance with so perfect a conviction of the truth that his furious rage knew no bounds. He scrupled not to communicate his fears to the father, and the bitter tidings were as the falling of a thunderbolt to the wretched old man—with a cry of rage and horror he bid his son go forth to seek her, and tear her living or dead from their detested enemy. The infuriated man required no second bidding; he dashed from the house, mounted his horse, and was soon careering through the village seeking the smallest indication of the route the fugitives had taken. This for some time seemed a vain attempt: Achmet Aga was known to be absent, but none could tell whither he had gone: at length a sufficient clue was given him by an old woman, who had passed the night on the plain, gathering herbs by moonlight, the necessary ingredient of

some infallible remedy. She said that she had been greatly terrified by a vision which had passed her—she had first seen a whirlwind of dust approaching, and as she knew, according to a popular superstition in Greece, that each one of these eddies, which the wind sometimes raises in fantastic circles along the road, contains a demon, who wreaths himself in them that he may dance therein unseen, she crouched behind a bush, and made the sign of the cross incessantly, whilst a huge black horse, bearing a double burden, flew past her at a furious pace. The outraged brother only paused to ask in which direction they had gone, and when she had pointed to the road which led to Marathon, he vanished from her sight, still faster than the ghostly horseman of the night before.

When he reached the village of Marathon, it was already late in the evening; but he had no difficulty in ascertaining that Achmet Aga had arrived that day, and had retired within a Turkish tower belonging to his father, which stood in an isolated position at some little distance. Thither he instantly repaired. It was surrounded by a high wall, but this the Greek, young and active, scaled in a moment, and dropped lightly and noiselessly within the garden which it enclosed. The first sight which met his eyes was his sister, who, in her fancied security, had come to enjoy the cool evening air, beneath the shade of the mulberry-trees, and was standing alone, evidently waiting for some companion. There was one near her, however, whom she dreamt not of; her brother silently approached her, and as he did so, he unslung the carabine that was strapped ready-loaded on his shoulder. At the sound of his footstep close to her, Daphné started, and looked round to meet his fierce eyes, fixed on her with so stern and re-

solute a gaze, that in one terrible look she read and knew her doom. The extremity of terror has generally the effect of paralysing the faculties altogether; and this was the case with poor Daphné. She stood as though transfixed, her great eyes riveted on her brother, and mechanically following his every movement with a sort of dreadful fascination. Vainly would she have striven to use her powerless limbs in flight; her bloodless lips refused even to utter a cry, and some invisible power seemed to hold her there before him, who now deemed himself but the instrument of her country's just revenge. Calmly, not a muscle of his stern countenance moving, not a moment's dimness moistening his angry eye, her brother raised the musket to his shoulder, adjusted it, took aim, and fired! A few steps only separated those children of the same parent, and the shot could not fail; the ball went straight to her heart, and with one single groan—but a groan that was never forgotten by him who heard it—Daphné fell lifeless to the ground.

He did not wait to look on her: rushing from the spot, he once more leapt the wall, mounted his horse, and fled, as men fly who bear with them the knowledge of a deed like this. He rested not till he reached home, and stood once more by his father's side. Unconsciously to himself, he seemed to have longed for the old man's commendation of this atrocious act, as a relief to the sharp sting which, in spite of every effort, pierced him now. He knew not human nature when he cherished such a hope. It is true he had but done the old man's bidding; but he went forth at the command of the patriot; he returned to tell the father he had slain his child! dreadful, therefore, was indeed the punishment of the fratricide, for the father cursed him with all the energy of his despair, and then turned

away to weep and lament, and refuse all food, until he drooped and died; and thus was the miserable man left alone with so heavy a remorse; and it has been to him as the avenger of blood. It has tracked his steps and haunted his pillow, and dried up the sources of joy and hope within him, till he seems to be daily growing into the image of the phantom that pursues him.

He saluted us silently as he passed us, for we had never been able to conquer our repugnance sufficiently to speak to him. We stood for a short time before the open khan, or public-house, where, on the feast days, an incredible number of cups of coffee are imbibed, while the villagers crowded round us to take leave: even the old woman who is the wonder of the country round for her great age—for it is known that she has passed 110 years—hobbled down to see us for the last time. We were much amused at the look of profound disgust with which she assured us, that if ever we came back, we should be certain to find her still alive, for that she had given up all hopes of dying. She has a curious idea on the subject: she thinks it a judgment on her, for some sin she has committed, that she is thus condemned to live; and grumbles much at the severity of the punishment. Having revisited all our old haunts, and taken a sorrowful farewell of our humble friends, we left this peaceful spot; so peaceful is it, indeed, that it has more than once been chosen as a resting-place by those whom the world has wearied or disgusted, till they have been driven from it again by that rigid and merciful destiny, which in so many different ways still teaches men to take their part in the active toil enjoined upon all living, and learn that this is not their rest.

The ride home to Athens, through the still cool even-

ing, was very pleasant. Our road lay the whole way along the vast plain which spreads itself out at the feet of Hymettus, and directly before us, lay the town with the sea beyond it, and the Acropolis standing out in strong relief against an horizon flaming like burnished gold. Notwithstanding the many elaborate descriptions of the scenery of Greece which have been given of late, I am certain none but the eye-witness alone can appreciate the effect produced by the extraordinary clearness of the atmosphere and purity of the air, which, while it brings the most distant objects seemingly quite close, tempers them into a most delusive beauty. I have seldom seen this habitual phenomenon more perfect than to-night. It even made the far blue islands of the quiet Ægean look as though they were floating on the bosom of the waters; and, instead of being solid and barren rocks, but lovely portions of that fair country which the Germans so poetically term "Dreamland," and which at too rough a breath of the strong sea breeze, would float away altogether, and dissipate themselves in the blue air.

CHAPTER IV.

Departure from the Piræus—Patriotism of English Sailors—Clearing of the Deck—Milords cheated—Their Ancestors abused—Disadvantage of being domesticated in Scenes of sacred or historic Interest—Neat Boots not to be had at Jerusalem—Themistocles' Tomb, a good Receptacle for Shells—The "Boy Jones" at Salamis—Midnight Appearance of Steamboat Travellers—Greek Mode of demonstrating Sorrow—Custom of shrieking over the Dead—Syra—Vague Attempt of the Passengers to take a Walk—Failure of the Attempt—Island of Tenos—Annual Pilgrimage—Miracles of its Panajia—Story of her Appearance—The possessed of Devils—Boa-Constrictors.

April 30th.

THE last day of our long residence in Athens passed away as rapidly as those days of parting, at once so precious and so painful, must ever pass, and at four o'clock we were assembled on the shores of the Piræus ready to embark in the Austrian steamer, which was to convey us to Syra. Wind and weather seemed very promising, and the vivid colouring of a calm summer's evening enhanced the favourable aspect which a landscape seen for the last time is sure to wear; and still, apt as we are to colour all things in nature from our own inward feelings, I could scarce believe that it was but because we saw it through our lingering gaze of regret, that the smile of the sunset had seemed to settle with such peculiar brightness on the glorious old Parthenon, as the olive grove hid it from our sight, and now shed so soft a delusion on all things around us; nor yet did we remember, as we looked our

last, that we were leaving a country, whose fame can yearly allure thousands to her shores, often with no more tangible bait, than an unforgotten name hallowing a desert. Greece had been to us a home; and there is more power in the association which connects some spot, with one hour of happiness gone by, than all the shadowy grandeur which the extinguished glory of the past can shed around it.

We were surrounded, however, by far too noisy a throng to have much time for reflection—most of those who had been in our service during our sojourn in the country had accompanied us to the shore, and now, with much vociferation and most emphatic gestures, poured forth their good wishes for our welfare, whose realisation we might be allowed, however, somewhat to deprecate, as we should have been placed much in the position of the Wandering Jew, if the thousands and the ten thousands of years they asked for us had been granted—at all events they testified much feeling, although I have often heard it said, with that cool assurance with which one individual sometimes loves to denounce a whole nation, that the Greeks are incapable of any feeling but for their own interest.

Captain G—— had kindly sent boats to convey us to the steamer, and independent of the great contrast between a man-of-war's barge and an unsteady little walnut shell, manned only by a picturesque old Hydriot without shoes or stockings, which would have been the alternative, it is always pleasant to go in an English boat, on account of the hearty good will with which the sailors are sure to lay to their oars when they discover that they are using their strength in behalf of their countrymen. We found the deck of the steamer crowded with passengers; it is just the season when travellers from all quarters

are congregating to the East; and as the same language was hardly spoken by any two of them, the scene of confusion was quite indescribable. Just before starting, the tumult reached its climax, and became one general scramble. No man could keep both his temper and his luggage—if he were good-natured, he inevitably lost his carpet bag; and if he got angry and abused his valet-de-place, as I heard some of my countrymen doing, his great grandfather was sure to be mentioned by those around, in terms which I should not have liked to have translated to the descendant of a person probably so respectable; but the warning sound of a bell soon put an end to the uproar—friends gave a quick grasp of the hand, and hurried away—boatmen, valets-de-place, and cab-drivers, made a last attempt to cheat the milords, their lawful prey, of a few more drachmés, before they were unceremoniously tumbled out of the steamer by the Austrian officers—and in a few minutes more we were rapidly passing between the two Phanars, which occupy the place of the Lions that once guarded the entrance to the bay of the Piræus.

If any thing can render a parting more painful than it is in the very nature of such an event to be, the fact of its taking place on board of a steamboat, would certainly do so; there is something so intolerable in the smiling indifference with which the captain gives the order to weigh the anchor, the very thought of which moment has haunted you for days before, and in the cutting politeness of the sailor, who begs you to move from the spot where you are straining your eyes to catch the last look of a face you may never see again, in order that he may coil a rope with due precision! These chilling trifles, however, have generally the effect of putting to the test whatever philosophy we may possess

on such occasions, and drawing our attention to the new scenes around us. There was ample amusement provided for us even on the narrow deck of our steamer, where persons belonging to so many different nations were assembled; and the landscape without, would have afforded interest and occupation to our minds at every turn, had we been less familiar with its details; for on the one side lay the lovely bay of Salamis, where hangs so profound a stillness, and the undulating hills growing tremblingly indistinct, as the purple shades closed round them, stretching on to Corinth and Megara; and on the other side, there lay the worn sea-girt tomb of the ancient hero, where the waves are ever rushing exultingly, as though they could never cease to triumph over him who once ruled them with a master hand.

But it is a decided disadvantage in being thus domesticated among scenes and sites which are expected to call forth, at all times, a proper degree of enthusiasm, that they will inevitably become connected in our minds with the mere passing events of every-day life, to the utter overthrow of any higher claim they may possess. I remember the dismay with which I heard a young Englishman, who had passed ten weeks at Jerusalem, pathetically complaining that he had found it impossible to procure a neat pair of boots in the holy city! Nevertheless, I must myself plead guilty to thinking of Themistocles' grave, only as the most favourable place for finding shells; while Salamis is inseparably united in my mind to that problem, never to be solved, as to why the "boy Jones" jumped overboard from the deck of the *Warspite*, when it was lying in that bay one cold night last year, and remained absent no one knows where during two days, since he was *not* found under a sofa, making invidious comparisons between the

furniture of Queen Amelia's sitting room and that of a similar apartment in Buckingham Palace. This speedy destruction of all delusion is not, I think, much to be regretted in such a country as Greece; even her historic associations can scarcely now be deemed beneficial, tending as they do to foster principally the overwrought enthusiasm of idlers in search of excitement. If, for them, too close an approximation should lay the ghosts of the wicked old heroes they are disposed to worship, it would perhaps be no great harm; but it is a far more important matter as regards the Holy Land. Much serious evil may be done, by bringing places, sacred from faith alone, in connexion with the palpable occurrences of every-day life. The commander of an English man-of-war told me, that he once accompanied a party of twenty from his own ship to Jerusalem, and that, out of that number seven returned unbelievers, not merely in the authenticity of localities, but in Christianity itself.

The sun had set before we left the Piræus, and as we have decidedly one great deficiency in this country, which is the total absence of twilight, night closed in so rapidly that we soon could distinguish nothing but the vague forms of the hills, changing rapidly as we proceeded on our course; nor had we time to examine our fellow-passengers before they had arranged themselves on deck for the night, and assumed that motley appearance which all who are accustomed to steamboat travelling must know so well, when, as it grows cold and dark, with the aid of Mackintoshes, oil-skin cloaks, Greek capotes, and so on, the prudent travellers transform themselves as it were into a set of living hieroglyphics, some representing bears and other animals, whilst others take the likeness of a leathern portmanteau, or a gigantic extinguisher. I was the last

to go down to the cabin, where I witnessed a scene that gave me a curious specimen of the way in which a Greek is taught to take the evils of life, small or great. Madame T——, one of the passengers, and an intimate friend of our own, lay on the floor frantiely twisting her hands in her long dishevelled hair, weeping and lamenting very audibly. As soon as she saw me, she exclaimed in the most piteous tones that if the machine could not be stopped, and the steamer returned to Athens instantly, it was all over with her. I asked what was the matter, and she told me that her little daughter had been seized with a sudden desire to return home, and on being told it was impossible, in laudable pursuance at the age of seven years of the invariable custom of the Greeks when their fate is too strong for them, had screamed incessantly for an hour, and was still screaming with a violence which made her mother fear she would go into fits. The child had certainly cried herself into a fever, but with the help of cakes and bon-bons, I succeeded in pacifying her, and quieted Madame T——, who was giving herself up to the most exaggerated grief, by reminding her that she might disembark next day at Syra if she chose, instead of going on to Jassy, which was her destination.

The conduct of the child gave a very fair idea of the present system of early moral education in Greece, which is certainly not very brilliant; and that of the mother was a complete illustration of the singular manner in which they think it incumbent on them to bear misfortune in this country, so far from looking on quiet resignation as a duty, or appreciating the calm heroism with which many a one will dispense with human sympathy, and hide their griefs in their own bosom, that they may not darken yet more a world already so dark with sorrow. The Greeks imagine

fortitude would seem unfeeling, and think it quite necessary on all occasions of affliction to go through a regular scene of a tragedy, with the most noisy and theatrical demonstration of despair. When a death occurs, for instance, it is instantly known to the whole neighbourhood from the shrieks and cries which are raised by the family, and continued without intermission till the body is removed for burial. This system is so universal, that it may be as much a relic of those days of old, when mourners were hired to shriek over the dead, as a trait of the national character, in the present time.

May 1st.

I found when I went on deck this morning that we were anchored before the island of Syra. It is a place where every one who has been in the Levant has most certainly visited, as it is the central point, where all the steamers touch in their several courses, and it is equally certain that they have carried away no very pleasant recollection of it, whether they have undergone the operation of being slowly roasted in the open Lazaretto during a ten days' quarantine, or, having merely passed a day there, have vaguely attempted to take a walk on the ill-arranged difficult staircases, which do, in fact, form the streets of a town devoid of a single advantage. This latter course we designed to adopt ourselves, as we were not to sail till evening, and with the instinct natural to travellers, we thought it incumbent on us to perform our part in exploring the interior of the town, instead of quietly remaining on board in the shade of the awning, from whence alone the view presented it in a rather more favourable aspect, spreading its white houses over the rocky side of the island. As yet, however, the grand object to which

all the passengers were desirous of attaining, was a speedy removal of themselves and their baggage into the other steamer, which was to convey us on to Smyrna; and this for the very excellent reason, that it was there the breakfast was prepared.

When we look back on a journey, we can speak of nothing but the wonderful things we have seen, and the great perils we escaped; but it is strange, if we think over any one day in detail, to remember how very important a place in our thoughts the securing of this same breakfast has always held. The change was soon effected; we hurried our proceedings as though some imperative duty demanded our instant disembarkation, and when this was accomplished, and we all stood on the white glaring beach, exposed to a tremendous sun, not one of us knew where we were to go to.

The island of Syra is one large rock. The town, ascending rapidly from the sea, terminates its ungraceful confusion of buildings in a little church, perched on the summit of a steep ascent. Some of our party proposed that we should make it the object of a pilgrimage, as it was pretty certain there would be a magnificent view from it, the site of those chapels being always admirably chosen to this end. We all consented, glad to have a definite object in our walk; but hardly had we gone a quarter of the way, that is, after having toiled for some time up the steepest and most villanous of paths, where the road consisted of sharp stones treacherously embedded in fine burning sand, when we suddenly came to the unanimous conclusion that no view could by any possibility be fine enough to compensate for such a laborious enterprise, and, therefore, coolly turning round, we all came down again and stood once more on the beach. An instantaneous

rush from all the boatmen to claim our patronage for the very short distance that separated us from our steamer, suggested to us that by far the best thing we could do was to take refuge as fast as possible in its cool recesses, which we ought never to have left. We first, however, visited the cathedral, which is really handsome, much more so at least than the church of St. Irene at Athens. It is strange that the capital should be so much worse off than any of the islands' towns in this respect. Syra, as being the chief mercantile port of Greece, is of course in constant communication with the world without, and has completely lost that *couleur locale*, that primitive simplicity of manners, and peculiarity of customs, which is the great charm of these remote little islands; nor has it even the picturesque beauty which so many of them possess in the highest degree. The island of Tenos, on the contrary, which lies just alongside of it, is extremely interesting under many points of view. It is one of the few places in Greece to which a pilgrimage is annually made; and it is supposed to be held in such peculiar favour by the Panajia (Holy Virgin), that she fails not once a year to perform one or more miracles in the really splendid church which has been raised to her honour. The traditionary origin of it all is thus given:

Some fifty years ago or more, when Tenos had no other claim on the Panajia than what it shared in common with all Greece, a poor old man in the village, dreamt that she appeared to him and desired him to go and dig in a certain spot not very far from the sea. As soon as he awoke, he lost no time in obeying the command. He easily found the place indicated, and set to work vigorously to remove the earth, which seems to have given way with a facility rather singular in that rocky country.

He had hardly dug above a few feet, when he uncovered a gorgeous image of the Panajia, lying within the earth all dressed in the freshest silks and satins. The old man was so overcome with this wonderful miracle, that he could hardly find strength to hurry home and announce the great news to the priests. They of course all expressed a becoming degree of amazement; and in company with the whole population, of the village, proceeded to the spot where the miraculous image was disinterred and conveyed with great solemnity to take her place in the church. The fame of this great event spread far and wide, but the miracle did not stop here, for it was soon found that the Panajia of Tenos healed the diseases of all those who came to make their offerings at her shrine. As soon as this was known, the devout pilgrims came flocking to her from all parts of the country, and in process of time she became so rich, that a really magnificent church was built for her.

It is decidedly the finest in all Greece, and is decorated not only richly but with taste, it stands on the spot where the image was found, and once a year, on the fête of the Panajia, hundreds and thousands of people even from the remotest part of the country, go to it in pilgrimage to offer up their devotions. It is at this period, that the miracles take place, principally on the insane, from which circumstance we may judge them to be rather the effect of imagination, than a designed imposition: a sort of hospital for lunatics has been established near the church on this account, and a very curious description was given to me of two of the patients who were supposed by the Greeks to be possessed of devils, and certainly the account of their whole appearance and symptoms was precisely similar to that given in Scripture. Neither of them

were cured, poor creatures! though their zealous friends kept them chained to a pillar before the altar for three weeks successively. On approaching the church, or any holy thing, such as the bible or the cross, these demoniacs fell into convulsions, foamed at the mouth, tore and wounded their own flesh, and sometimes had epileptic fits.

The fête for this year is just over, and the boatmen told me, as they rowed back to the steamer, that no miracle had been performed, but that the concourse of people had been immense. The natives of Tenos assert, that one part of the island is infested with a species of enormous serpent, which if their account is exact, must be the boa-constrictor, and I have heard it attested by many who said they had seen them.

CHAPTER V.

Return on Board—Turkish Word, "Kef"—The various Passengers—Tragic Story of the Prince M———The mad Doctor; his Specific; his unwilling Patients—The Sciot Family—Conversation of the beautiful Sciots—Scio—Late Insurrections in Crete—Story of the Cretan—Warmth of Feeling of the Islanders—New Passengers—Negro Family—Ineffectual Attempts to form their Acquaintance—Anecdote of Dumas, the Author—Comparison of the Arabic of Algiers and Asia Minor—An Intelligent Turk—His Reverence for the Koran.

WHEN we arrived on board, we found we had several hours to wait before sailing for Smyrna: rather a pleasant prospect than otherwise, to lie idly under the awning of the steamer, as it rode quietly at anchor on the still soft waters, the imperceptible waves rippling gently against its sides, the bright sunshine sparkling round, bringing out the faint outline of the distant islands, each one of which is a gem in itself; and that peculiarly soft and balmy breeze, whose wings are always laden with bright day-dreams, stealing gently over us. There is a Turkish word, which is rapidly becoming adopted amongst Europeans in the East, that expresses most admirably the pleasurable sensations such a position would necessarily produce. "Kef" is a word which could have no existence out of a warm climate; but there, short as it is, it conveys most perfectly to the mind every idea of luxurious quiet, coolness, and idleness, a state of complete repose both of soul and body, with the senses just sufficiently awake to

enjoy the warm breath of the wind, tempered by cooling shades, and the distant sound of music or the soothing murmur of refreshing waters. It does one's heart good to see a Turk at his Kef, and it is an employment at which he spends several hours every day; but in his mind, I should think it was inseparably connected with the pleasant gurgling sound of the rose-water rising and falling in his narghilé as he smokes. How strange we should think it in our busy, active country, where soul and body both are always going at railway speed, to see any one deliberately sit down to make an occupation of this dreamy idleness for half the day.

Very profound, however, was our Kef in the harbour of Syra this afternoon, till all the passengers had collected on the deck, and then we roused ourselves with some curiosity to examine them, for we knew that several amongst the number designed to accompany us all the way up the Danube to Vienna, and it was a matter of no small importance to ascertain what sort of companions we were destined to have for so long a period. Madame T——, mother to the young lady whose noisy patriotism had so much disturbed me the night before, is a charming Phanariote, of very high birth, with whom we had been long acquainted. Like most of the noble Greek families, the history of hers is marked by one of those real and palpable tragedies which no fiction or romance could ever equal. It is this that makes these countries so interesting to live in. In our own country, the family records must go back to the days of the Pretender at the very least, before they can furnish any romantic incident; but here half the people you meet have played their part in some frightful drama of real life, and have dragged their infant feet through scenes of blood and horror.

The Prince M——, Madame T——'s father, was

dragoman to the Sublime Porte shortly before the revolution broke out, and he then lived in the enjoyment of a large fortune, with his wife and children, at the Phanar; but it is supposed that he had begun to join secretly with his countrymen in their plots for delivering themselves from the Moslem yoke, which certainly was a species of treachery to his Turkish masters; and apparently, by means of the widely-spread system of spies always at work in Turkey, his defection had become known to Sultan Mahmoud. One morning the prince received a sudden order to repair to the seraglio. He obeyed, suspecting nothing; but scarcely had he reached the audience-chamber, when he was seized and conveyed to an outer court, where he was beheaded instantly, before the very eyes of the sultan himself, who stood at the window to witness the execution; nor was he even given time to ask what his crime had been.

Vainly did his poor wife, fearing no evil, wait for him that day. As she looked up the Bosphorus, to watch the long-delayed coming of his well-known boat, she little dreamt the treacherous waters had already borne his lifeless form past her very windows. At last a countryman of her own ventured, probably at the risk of his life, to come and tell her the truth, and warn her not to delay her immediate flight She was obliged to abandon her house and all it contained, and take refuge at Odessa, where she remained, and educated her numerous family, as best she might. It was to visit her, now resident at Jassy, in Moldavia, that Madame T—— undertook this journey, in company with her youngest brother, a remarkably fine young man, and a true Greek in heart, though with the advantage of a European education. He had been sent when quite a boy to serve in the French navy,

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and had but just returned to his native country. Had he chosen to remain in France, and become naturalised there, he might have had a very prosperous career; whilst in Greece, he had very little prospect of advancement; but when urged to do so, he answered quietly: "I prefer France, and I might have done well there; but I will not abandon my country, for which my father died, and my mother mourned twenty years." They have also with them one of the professors of the university at Athens, who was probably very able and learned when in presence of his class; but at present he distinguished himself principally by the wretched French he spoke, and which was unfortunately much called into play, as we had a very amusing French party on board.

Monsieur de S——, the principal personage amongst them, was a literary man of considerable celebrity, not more remarkable for his talents than for his brilliant conversation and distinguished manners. He had come out to the East on a mission, and, in order to render his journey somewhat of a party of pleasure, had collected round him six of his friends, all disposed for merriment and gaiety. Four of them had preceded him to Constantinople by the last steamer; and of the two who remained, one had a fund of good-humoured comicality, which alone would have sufficed to enliven the whole party; in contradistinction to these, was a party of Americans, only remarkably for the pertinacity with which they sat with their hats on while at dinner in the close, crowded cabin. Our numbers acquired an unexpected addition from the shore just before starting, which spread an universal panic amongst us all. This was a Greek doctor, a native, I believe, originally of Syra, but well known everywhere, as he is perfectly mad. His insanity was caused, I think, by over

study, and he is not kept in confinement, as he is considered quite harmless; but not the less he manages to inspire every one with dread. When I saw him rushing wildly up the gangway, I had actually the barbarity to wish most heartily that he were chained to a pillar in the Panajia's church at Tenos, for I had not lost the impression his appearance had produced on me the last time I saw him, when he created a great sensation at a party of the Austrian ambassador's at Athens. A number of people assembled there to hear an amateur concert, when the door suddenly opened, and the mad doctor, by which name he is generally known, bounded in with what he evidently considered a most graceful step, and commenced bowing elaborately to every one present; uninvited and most thoroughly unexpected, his appearance created the greatest consternation; the music ceased, and as he approached, the whole company rose and retreated into the next room—thither he followed them, gesticulating, declaiming, and laying his hand impressively on his breast whenever he caught the eye of any unfortunate lady; nor could he be got rid of the whole evening, for the ambassador, though somewhat annoyed, was too humane to irritate or distress him as he knew him to be harmless.

At four o'clock we weighed anchor, and set off making right for the island of Scio, where we were to touch on our way. Soon after we left the harbour, it came on to blow just sufficiently hard to make those unaccustomed to the sea thoroughly uncomfortable, whilst to others the rapid motion and exhilarating freshness of the breeze were delightful. The waves, waking out of their long deep sleep, began dancing round the steamer most merrily, tossing up their crested heads all glittering with phosphoric light; gradually they leapt higher and higher

and higher, as though they had a great curiosity to know what was passing on deck, and what effect their capers were producing there, and, finally, one more hardy than the rest took a bold leap, and fairly dashed in amongst us all, spreading confusion far and near. At once, like a troop of schoolboys playing leap-frog, the rest followed its example; one after another they came bounding in, and soon we were drenched again and again with spray and foam. This change in the weather acted differently, of course, on the various passengers. The Greek professor grew melancholy, and declared he had not thought he should have felt leaving his country only for a few months so much as he now found he did. The three Frenchmen, on the contrary, grew ominously gay; and Monsieur C——, who had owned before, that he was always ill at sea, began to sing a sentimental song very much out of tune. Just at this juncture, the mad doctor suddenly skated with great velocity into the centre of the circle of passengers, holding a glass in one hand, and in the other a small bottle containing some horrible compound of a very dark colour, waving his hand to demand our attention, he exclaimed in a loud voice, "This, my friends, is a preventative against sea-sickness invented by myself, of which you are all going to partake, and then we shall defy the weather." We all looked aghast, and communicated to each other our strong determination on no account to taste of it, for it might just as well be poison as any thing else; but the doctor took no notice of these looks, and smilingly glided up to the professor, to whom he proceeded first to administer his dreaded specific. By what mysterious influence he carried his point, we could not conceive; but to our utter astonishment, the poor professor, after having been seen to make the most violent demon-

strations of unwillingness, suddenly swallowed the dose with a very wry face; the doctor still smiling blandly, then proceeded towards the three Frenchmen, they instantly began bowing to the very ground, and with the most exquisite politeness assured him they never were sea-sick. Monsieur C——, entreating him to fly to the assistance of the American party, who he declared were looking very ill, but it was of no avail,—subdued by the same secret fascination, to our infinite amusement, they ended by taking a tea-spoonful each ; the scene was really most ludicrous, the madman succeeded in making every person on board swallow this odious stuff. I myself protested I would resist courageously, but when he came towards me, and fixed his eyes upon me, full of that strange expression peculiar to insanity, I gave in as the rest had done already. The best of it was that hardly had he administered his horrible potion, when every one became extremely ill, he himself the very first, which I attribute solely to this dreadful specific, as the weather was really not bad.

The little cabin in which I was to pass the night was apart from the rest, but I found I was not to have it to myself, for as I went in, the curtain of one of the larger berths was gently drawn back, and displayed one of the very prettiest living pictures I had ever beheld. Two young girls, evidently Sciots from their costume, were reclining together wrapt in one large Turkish pelisse, and from amongst this mass of furs, nothing was to be seen but two beautiful heads and a profusion of marvellously long fair hair twisted round their little red caps. They looked timidly at me with their almond-shaped blue eyes, and then, probably, thinking I could not understand them, resumed their conversation. There is a degree of unso-

phisticated simplicity peculiar to those islanders, which is very pleasing. These young Sciots displayed much of it as they talked together, and counted the hours which must yet elapse before they could see Scio, which seemed to be for them the fairest of spots. Presently the cabin door opened a little way, and a pleasing, venerable face, surmounted by a great turban, looked wistfully in. The intruder evidently knew he had no business there, but as I was sitting reading, his fine old head was gradually followed by the rest of his person, clothed in flowing Turkish robes, which are still worn in many of the islands. This was evidently the father, and his question, "Are you asleep, my children?" received a vehement negative from the two lively girls, who poured forth a number of questions, and seemed most unwilling to allow him to leave them again. He also manifested a degree of paternal fondness, which corresponded well with what I had heard of the warmth and depth of feeling displayed by these islanders in the common relations of life. When I found that they were in a great fright at the notion of the steamer going on through the night, when the sailors could not possibly see their way, I overcame the reserve, which makes the English, when abroad, neglect many acts of kindness we would otherwise perform, and began to speak to them.

Their father then left them quite relieved, and we became fast friends with that degree of rapidity with which friendships are made in those countries, and, strange to say, are often very true and lasting. They told me their whole history, and talked merrily half the night—they had passed their lives in Scio, and never left till their mother died a few months before, when their father took them to Syra for change of scene; now they were returning home to leave it no more, and fervently

did they long for the first sight of their own dear island. When they found I had not yet seen it, they gave me a most poetic description of Scio, and of the life they led there; it was without question the most beautiful spot in the world, they said; to be sure they had never seen any other place, excepting Syra, yet still, nothing could be so charming as Scio; there were such vineyards and gardens, so full of orange-trees and abundant streams of water; then it was delightful in the cool evening to go down and dance the romaica on the sea beach, and watch the fishermen at work by torchlight. They pitied me very much for not being a Sciot. I asked them if they had ever heard of Homer, and they said they had not; then one recollected that there was a Monsieur Homero, who had died there last year, and they did not doubt this was my friend; and so they rambled on, till the rocking of their rough cradle lulled them to rest, and then rolling themselves up in their great pelisse, they went snugly to sleep.

May 2nd.

"Scio, Scio! wake up and look up at Scio." These words, uttered by two clear, ringing voices, woke me out of a sound sleep, at five o'clock this morning; and when I looked up, my two little friends of the night before were bending over me their pretty faces glowing with delight. We had anchored only for half an hour, and I was therefore on deck as soon as possible. Their enthusiastic description did not really seem to have been exaggerated, for it is certainly a most lovely island. The luxuriance of the verdure, so rich and fresh, is quite striking; and the beautiful gardens sloped down to the very edge of the water, where they are bathed by the foam of every wave; the sunny brightness of the whole scene is very remark-

able. The cloudless sky was of that pure limpid blue, which we sometimes see in the eye of a young child, and the sea was like the same eye wet by its first bright tear. I could scarce believe, as I looked on this smiling spot, that it was indeed the scene of that dreadful massacre, the horrors of which have been so repeatedly detailed. This shocking episode of modern history was sufficiently striking to have been well known even in our own distant country, but it is strange how many of these frightful events, involving the fate of thousands, have often scarcely been heard of beyond the limit where the echo of the very cannon itself has died away. The late insurrection in Crete is an instance of this. It is probably just known as a fact, that the Greeks rebelled against their Turkish masters in 1841, and after a few skirmishes were subdued; yet this fierce and tragical struggle displays a whole people convulsed and in misery, who will long groan under the disastrous consequences of that civil war.

I remember how forcibly the fatal results of this now forgotten attempt were brought before me a year or two ago, when I was travelling in the island of Naxos. I had taken refuge from the heat with my brother in an open khan or café, as it is called, and we entered into conversation with some Greeks who were sitting there smoking. We asked if all was quiet now in Crete; they answered that it was, and were continuing to talk on the subject, when a groan was suddenly heard to proceed from another part of the room, which startled us all. We looked round and saw a spectre-like figure slowly rising from a corner. It was a tall, wretched-looking man, broken down and emaciated, and quite lame from a gun-shot wound in the knee; he was miserably clad, and he came forward leaning on a stick, and drawing the remnant of an old capote round him. The Greeks made way

for him with looks of compassion, and bid him tell us his history, since we were interested in the state of Crete. He complied at once, and sat down beside us; but I never shall forget the recital, for there is nothing so painful as to see a strong man weep, and the large tears rolled over his sunburnt cheeks as he spoke. He said that he was a Cretan, and that he had lived quietly and happily with his mother and sister in an isolated part of the island, cultivating his vineyard, and taking no concern with what was going on without. When the insurrection broke out, he still remained in his own little house, which was at some distance from any village, feeling his presence to be necessary for the protection of his family, as the Turks, infuriated, spared neither man, woman, nor child; but one day, a party of Greek soldiers stopped to refresh themselves at his cottage, after a skirmish in which they had been engaged, and they taunted him so bitterly for thus remaining inert when his countrymen were sacrificing their lives in the cause of liberty, that stung to the very soul, he seized his sword and left the house with them, in spite of the frantic entreaties of his mother and sister. For a few days he was engaged in continual fighting with his new companions in the neighbourhood of Suda Bay; at last the wound from which he was still suffering when we saw him, disabled him so completely, that he was forced to relinquish his post and return home. With much difficulty, after two days' journey, he reached his house, or rather, the spot where it had once been, for a few smoking and blackened ruins were all that now remained of his pretty cottage and fertile vineyard: utterly overcome at the sight, he staggered on, scarcely knowing where he went; an agony of fear as to the fate of those most dear to him, paralysed him so completely, that he

could not even call to them by name to relieve his suspense, but as he reached the heap of mouldering stones that marked the threshold of his once happy home, his feet stumbled on a sudden obstacle in his path; mechanically he stooped down, and his eye lit on the mangled body of his mother, already quite stiff and cold. His young sister he never saw more, she had been carried off by the Turks; he himself, thus completely deprived of all his former means of subsistence, infirm and broken-hearted, with difficulty made his escape from the distracted country, and came to Naxos, where he still lives on charity. And this is but one individual out of the vast numbers whose utter ruin was effected by this revolt, so casually mentioned, and so soon forgotten.

My reflections were interrupted by the two pretty Sciots, who came to take leave of me, with many vehement expressions of regret and regard. This would be considered extremely absurd after a twelve hours' acquaintance anywhere else; but amongst the natives of the burning East, the quick vivid feelings are soon aroused, and their glowing imagination carries them on readily to bestow their strong passionate affections, without dreaming of pausing, as we in the chilly north would do, to calculate prudently if the object be worthy of them. One may, doubtless, make many philosophical reflections on the certainty that sentiments so rapidly awakened, will be as evanescent as they are prompt; but not the less, this readiness of sympathy and warmth of expression do in truth cast a glow over life, and make this selfish world seem far less of a peopled wilderness, where all are mingling together and yet each is most utterly alone, than it really is.

We delayed here only long enough to take on board a number of strange looking figures with the oriental cos-

tume, and thoroughly Asiatic in appearance, showing how rapidly we were approaching another quarter of the globe; and then we resumed our course direct for Smyrna. Soon there remained to us nothing of Scio but the perfume of its orange trees, which still came to us on the land breeze when already its blue rocks and hills were growing dim in the distance. The scent from the lemon groves of the Island of Poros is so strong, that it is felt three miles distant, of course long before the land comes in sight. It is quite startling, thus surrounded only by sea and sky, when these odours come stealing over the salt wave, so redolent of unseen gardens and far distant bowers, luxuriant with blossom.

We were much amused watching the various groups of newly-arrived passengers, as they proceeded systematically to make themselves comfortable, spreading out their carpets, and seating themselves thereon, pipe in hand, as near the Europeans as they could, that they might solace themselves by looking on at our proceedings through their half-closed eyes, just as they would at a theatrical representation. One group, a family of negroes, particularly attracted our attention, principally from the extreme ugliness of the women and children. I do not know where they could have come from, for the Nubians are generally not only positively handsome, but very interesting and intelligent-looking, whilst these had the most heavy, loutish appearance, and a vacant gaze of complete stupidity. Monsieur C——, always looking out for amusement, hovered round this party for some time, endeavouring to make himself agreeable by the most persuasive and animated pantomime; but with all his efforts he could not succeed in making them move so much as a muscle of their faces. Finally, he possessed himself, I

know not how, of one of the children, which he led up and presented to us, as he said as an interesting specimen of the rising generation. Monsieur de S—— looked attentively at him for a few minutes, and then gravely asserted it as his opinion that it was not a child; it might be a monkey, he said, or a young bear, but it was nothing human, he was convinced. Certainly, it was the most extraordinary looking animal I ever saw; with a hideous little black grinning face, relieved by a red and white turban, a fur jacket, and a pair of huge yellow pantaloons. Monsieur de S—— said it reminded him of a story, really not bad, of the author, Alexander Dumas, who is a great friend of his. His birth is supposed not to be very illustrious; and a great personage at court the other day, rather wishing to mortify him, asked him who his father was. Dumas answered with the greatest promptitude and composure: "Sire, my father was a Creole, my grandfather was a Negro, and my great-grandfather was an ape."

Monsieur de S—— gave a very interesting account of the comparison he had been making between the Arabic spoken at Algiers and that of different parts of Asia. He had found it necessary to acquire this language in the pursuit of his numismatic studies, and had learnt both to speak and write it perfectly, from several natives of Algiers, who were at Paris. He said he had expected to have some difficulty in making himself understood in the East, were it but for the difference of the pronunciation, but this had not proved the case. The language was precisely the same, and, excepting a few contractions used in writing, he found nothing new to learn. He wrote a few lines on a card, that I might judge of the similarity which it is said to have with the Turkish character, to which, however, it seems to me to

bear no other resemblance than that it is written from right to left. A grave, intelligent-looking Turk had been watching us for some time, with much curiosity. At last, unable to overcome the inquisitiveness which is a prominent feature in their national character, he came up, and took the card out of my hand. He started when he saw in what language it was written, and looked at Monsieur de S—— with much astonishment; then stroked his beard several times, and doubtingly hazarded a few words of Arabic. His delight knew no bounds, when Monsieur de S—— answered him in the same language, with the greatest fluency. After conversing for some time, the Turk bowed, and in the most solemn manner presented his thumb to Monsieur de S——, who returned this expression of good will very common in the East, with the utmost gravity, though we could not help laughing immoderately at the elegance of the salutation. I was struck by seeing the Turk carefully fold up the card, and throw it into the sea, to as great a distance as he could reach. Monsieur de S—— told me the reason of this was that the lines he had written on it were a verse from the Koran, and it is a part of their religion to prevent the possibility of any thing profaning a portion of the book they hold sacred. The reverential spirit which produces these observances, is worthy of imitation. Monsieur de S—— afterwards wrote a few more lines in Arabic, which he refused to explain to me, for the purpose, as he said, of exciting my curiosity, and laughingly defied me to procure a translation of them. I endeavoured to accomplish this by asking in Greek of the Turk, who understood what was going on, to explain them to me; but here I was quite defeated, for he looked contemptuously at me, and asked me what was I but a woman,

that he should disoblige that learned man for me. We amused ourselves in this way as long as there was nothing but blue sea round us; but as soon as the coast of Asia began to rise slowly before us, appearing all verdant and smiling, out of the bosom of the waters, we could no longer attend to any thing but that bright prospect.

CHAPTER VI.

Beauty of the Asiatic Coast—Castle of Smyrna—First View of the Gate of the East—Smyrna no longer considered merely the Seat of Trade—The Neutral Ground where all the Denominations meet—American and English Missions—Difficulties of Landing—Imposing Emirs proved to be Valets-de-place—European Smyrniot—Clock-work Conversation of the Turks—Populace in the Street—Solemn insolence of the Turks—The Armenian—Bulgarian—Jew—Plainness of the Turkish Women—The Arabian Nights at Fault—Barber's Shop—The "Quartier Franc"—Effect of the Increasing Facilities of Intercourse in Smyrna—Drawing-rooms at the Street-door—Bridge of the Caravans—The Caravan—The Stream dividing the Living and the Dead—The Fire Worshipper—Restoration of the Greek Language—The Armenian Religion.

THERE must always be a certain degree of beauty in the landscape whose asperities are softened by distance, just as hope ever veils benignly the harsh realities of the future; yet I cannot think this delusive power alone could make the first glance of the eastern world, that land of our dreams now shaping itself into a solid existence before our eyes, appear so strikingly beautiful, as it certainly did to us. The long undulating hills of Asia Minor seemed so fresh and green after the arid plains of Attica, to which we were accustomed, and the pretty Turkish villages lay so snugly embedded in luxuriant groves of olive and other trees of richer foliage, strange to our eyes. Then it sufficed to see but one slender minaret, with which each little hamlet was more or less plentifully supplied, rising up beside some towering palm, and with the strong association of ideas, the whole land of the East seemed to

open before us, imagination conjuring up all those glowing scenes of luxury and magnificence which make one fancy oriental life a sort of substantial poem, till we grew impatient even of the calm and lovely scene around us, in our anxiety actually to tread that sun-lit shore.

We coasted along the little island of Vourla, behind which, in its quiet bay, the British and French vessels stationed at Smyrna generally lie. The Turks formerly would not allow them to pass the castle which guards the entrance to Smyrna bay, and they were consequently obliged to take up some post on the outside. The Turks are not in general very famous for their military arrangements, but this fort is certainly very strong, and so admirably placed for the defence of the city, that it has often been termed the "gate of Smyrna." It is built on a neck of land jutting out just where the bay is extremely narrow, from the long stretch of sand banks opposite extending some six miles in length. In consequence of these, any vessel entering the harbour must necessarily pass within the range of the cannon, placed a fleur-de-l'eau, so that their sweeping fire would be most destructive. As soon as we had passed this castle the bay widened again, and the view opened out upon us in the most admirable manner. It was just noon; and the most dreary of deserts must have looked bright, bathed in the flood of intense light which was pouring down from a burning sky; but it was indeed no desert on which this vivid glow was shed. A semicircle of lofty and richly-wooded hills closed round the sparkling waters of a calm, unruffled bay, and just opposite, half-veiled by their varying shadows like an oriental beauty, lay the fair town of Smyrna, mosque and minaret and fantastic-shaped houses mingling in picturesque confusion, and stamping it at once with the peculiar character of

the Asiatic city. I was greatly struck with the appearance of one spot, which alone in all the gloomy landscape lay dark and sad; for not even that flaming sunshine could enliven the sombre cypress-grove which, close to the gay dwellings of the living, and yet perfectly distinct from them, had gathered all their dead within its silent shades.

Smyrna is a spot daily becoming more interesting in various points of view. We certainly owe this to the march of intellect among us of late, that we no longer judge of a place solely with reference to its commercial prosperity, or its political position; the moral condition of the people is now anxiously considered, and men are learning everywhere to look on the great multitude, not only with a view to their interests as a mass, but as an assemblage of individuals of which each one has an immortal soul.

Smyrna would formerly have been mentioned merely as the seat of extensive trade; but now its actual condition becomes deeply important, when we view it as a sort of gate to the East, a starting point from whence the various channels of communication diverge into that portion of the habitable globe, where the sun of nature shines most brightly, and the darkness of error and superstition lie most thick and gloomy; and thus viewed, it is indeed strange to find on the site of one of the Seven Churches, the common ground where the followers of every different creed may meet and dwell together in harmony. From the position of the place, and its extensive mercantile connexions, tolerance is in fact expediency; and side by side where once shone the candlestick of that church, which amid tribulation and poverty was rich indeed, now rise the Moslem mosque and Jewish synagogue, the church of the Greek and the temple of the Gheber. Here the Nestorian and Armenian are seen to kneel together, while the

Protestant missionary and the Roman priest meet over the graves reserved for Christians only.

The number of missionaries who have been sent to Turkey, and are established at Smyrna, is very considerable; and it may well be a matter of fervent rejoicing that such is the case, for it is by their means alone that we can hope to reach those benighted lands which of late have opened before us as a vast field of most needful labour; surely, could we but hear it, day and night must the deep voice of all that people, bound by the thraldom of the most degraded and sensual of creeds, be calling out to us, "save us, we perish;" that bitter cry of old was uttered not in vain by those who, had it not been heard, would but have slept beneath the wave, till the sea gave up her dead, and then gone forth to everlasting life; but we, now that we have it in our power to give light to such great multitudes sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, are called on to avert a wreck of souls, all hurrying down to the ocean of eternity.

It must be owned that America has done far more than England in providing the labourers so much required for this work in the East, but we may hope that our own country will not be long deficient in this respect, since the strong necessity for further aid must ever be brought before the travellers now exploring those countries in daily increasing numbers.

The brilliant view of Smyrna had struck us all so favourably, that every one was now impatient to get on shore, even the American party, who at first would only respond to the admiring expressions of the rest of the passengers, with strong eulogiums of their respective birthplaces, expressed some anxiety as to how the landing was to be accomplished. To tell the truth, none of us much liked to trust ourselves in the little, frail, slender caiques

which awaited us, dancing on the waves with a lightness and elegance more pleasant to look at than safe to experience; but there was no other mode of conveyance, and we at last submitted to be handed into them with the most civilised politeness, by various imposing looking personages, whose flowing robes, long beards, and weighty turbans, would have inspired us with all sorts of solemn visions of Imauns and Emirs, and so on, had they not instantaneously on coming on board dispelled the illusion, by begging us in most fluent French, and even English, to engage them as valets-de-place. We arrived on shore in perfect safety, though in considerable trepidation, for our boat bounded on the waves as if it had been made of India rubber, and our very first footsteps on the Asiatic shore were attended with that inevitable disenchantment which is sure to follow, in this world, an actual contact with things that afar off seem most bright.

The close narrow streets were dark and dirty, and the warehouses of the European merchants, amongst which we passed, as hopelessly uninteresting as such buildings must everywhere be; but matters greatly improved as we penetrated further into the town, amid groups which presented an endless variety of costume, and shaded by the projecting balconies of strange moresque-looking houses, whose open doors let us have a glimpse of marble courts, half garden, half drawing-room, which quite suited the enthusiastic orientalism of some of the party. There is a vast deal of mongrel civilisation, if I may use such a term, at Smyrna, which the numerous European families who have been settled there for fifty or a hundred years have introduced, though themselves perhaps hardly aware how much of the true spirit of the East has been instilled into their own manners and habits with the lapse of time. They are very tenacious of their

origin, and the customs of their respective countries are carefully transmitted by them from father to son; yet often they live and die without ever quitting the place, and their whole style of life is thoroughly Asiatic. This combination, by the way, of the refinement of more enlightened lands with the luxurious indolence of this country, makes as agreeable an existence as can well be imagined. Their daily Kef, that is their repose during the sultry hours of the day, is not the less pleasant, that they bring themselves into the dreamy state requisite by reading, which no Turk was ever known to do; and the moonlight hours spent by them on the roofs of their houses, glide all the more swiftly away, that they are enlivened by an animated conversation on the foreign news or other interesting topics, instead of the formal complimentary phrase emitted at stated intervals, which, according to the oriental style, would be the only interruption to the silence. I never can see a Turk gravely performing this customary exercise, without comparing him to our old-fashioned clock at home, ringing the quarters with the same regularity and with the addition of a little tune varied each time, so that it is rather the more entertaining piece of furniture of the two.

The Smyrniot Europeans have a well-founded reputation for hospitality, which would render it a delightful place of residence for a few months; to us, indeed, it was almost a home, from the kindness of our numerous friends and connexions, whose houses were open to us. We should have found the walk from the shore to the end of the street of roses, where Madame V——'s house stood, rather tedious in the oppressive heat, but for the succession of amusing sights passing before our eyes. First, were the Turks themselves, who, as it was too hot for their fur pelisses, which give dignity to their short, thick-

set figures, look positively top-heavy in their enormous turbans. It was most amusing to see the sublime air of indifference with which they jostled past us despicable Christians, affecting not even to see us, and apparently rather wishing to tumble over us than otherwise. Then came the Armenian, with something like a small black balloon on his head; and the Bulgarian all made up of furs and untanned leather, passing us with a grin, which showed a most formidable range of sharp white teeth. Then the Dervish, to me a most interesting individual at all times, on account of the mystery which envelops their creed, with his solemn step, and face so deadly pale; the Jew, not the miserable looking creature we see in our large towns stealing from the pawnbroker's shop, with the low cunning, which results perhaps from ill usage, stamped on his haggard face, but dignified-looking men in a peculiar and really gorgeous dress, whose calm and noble countenance invariably wears an expression that seems to say, they deem themselves honoured by their religion and seek to honour it; and then, amid all this fantastic population, like a sprinkling of living mummies, the Turkish women come rolling along, going from side to side as if they were walking on a heavy sea: nor were we disposed to admit, that it was their brown cloaks and huge yellow slippers alone that gave them so ungraceful an appearance; for when they politely raised a corner of their thick white veil, in order to make a grimace at us, they never failed to show us a singularly ugly face. We were, however, quite satisfied with the thoroughly Eastern appearance of every thing around us, all excepting Monsieur C——, who said that he had studied the Arabian Nights, as the best guide to these countries, and protested, that in the proper course of

events, we ought to see a window open and a beautiful young lady appear, who should water the flowers on the balcony, smile bewitchingly on us, and then disappear; or else at least meet three handsome princes, with only three eyes between them, wandering in search of a kingdom. He was at last somewhat pacified with the aspect of a barber's shop, which was quite in accordance with the description he had read of them; and where, on an open platform, a talkative little man in a green silk dressing-gown was shaving the head and curling the beard of a pompous old Turk.

We parted from our fellow-passengers at the door of their hotel, separating, each with a different plan for seeing as much as we possibly could, during the short stay our steamer made at Smyrna. Happily, as far as actual sight-seeing went, the same objects of interest would be found at Constantinople; and there is no doubt that even one hour's actual walking about in a town, gives one a far more thorough acquaintance with the peculiar character of the place, than volumes of elaborate description. We went on to Madame W——'s house, where we found the family of the excellent and hospitable consul for Holland assembled to greet us, and give us a hearty welcome, assuredly as precious a thing as one mortal being can bestow on another; for go where we will, we carry our human sympathies with us, whose power to affect us, through the homely common ties that cling most closely, so far outweighs the nobler gratifications we may procure the mind. The wished-for sight of some glorious monument of ancient days, teeming with the most stirring memories, could never produce in us the thrill of joy which is conveyed by the warm pressure of a friendly hand in a strange country; and long after the interesting

sights or striking features of the landscape have faded from our memory, the kindly smile that greeted our arrival, or the sorrowful look of farewell at parting, will remain as strong and vivid, as when they first were precious to us in the foreign land.

We agreed to remain within doors for some hours, till the heat diminished; and established ourselves on the luxurious divans, which surrounded a room whose darkened windows were arranged so to open, as to admit the very faintest breath of cooling air which might exist. The houses in the Quartier Franc, are many of them extremely handsome and most commodious. They are generally all built on the same plan. A long outer passage, almost resembling a street, leads into a court, which is rendered cool and agreeable by the shade of large trees and an open fountain. Here seats are placed, where the servants and dependants of the family establish themselves, and sometimes the masters also profit by the accommodation they afford in the cool of the evening. The house consists of large airy rooms, with but little furniture, opening into one another; light curtains sometimes replacing the door, almost useless in this country; and all are abundantly supplied with balconies and terraces. We enjoyed a few hours' conversation with our friends extremely, for they had much to tell us, as to the changes and improvements going on amongst them. Smyrna, like every other place, is feeling the effects of that facility. of intercourse and rapidity of movement, which is so marvellously changing the whole face of the world just now. It is impossible to travel anywhere, without becoming aware how strangely countries once perfectly distinct under every point of view are becoming amalgamated. It must necessarily be so, when the

door is open for the actual material intercourse between one people and another; the spirit of the nation will always to a certain degree pass with it. Thus for example, when the French government concludes a commercial treaty in some distant part of the world, by which a foreign port is for the first time opened to their trading vessels, it is a certain and natural consequence, that whatever may have been the religion of the place previously, a year would not have elapsed, before an open scepticism or infidelity will there be taking firm root; or when a town, as in the case of Smyrna, becomes a station for the different fleets, as certainly will its inhabitants acquire a pernicious taste for dissipation, and an enervating love of refinement, raising wants never felt before.

It certainly does seem strange to find that a wretched Italian opera should now be the popular amusement of this Asiatic city, where still the palm trees wave, and the dark complexioned natives murmur in their own soft oriental tongues, and at times the fierce simoon comes to veil its unfading sunshine in a dark cloud of deadly blighting sand, which its rushing wings have gathered from the desert over which it so lately passed! And even at the same hour, when, at no great distance, the moonbeams lie cold and still upon the site of Sardis, solemn in its desolation, and the panthers are howling fiercely round the lonely ruins of Ephesus, the civilised inhabitants are dancing quadrilles and waltzes to the music of a military band, or profiting by the cool night hours to exhibit on the public promenade their private interpretation of the last *Journal des Modes*, which has furnished them with an exaggerated account of the Paris fashions. We had agreed to visit this latter scene of refined amusement, as the bridge of the caravans, where it takes place, is one of the most beautiful spots near Smyrna.

As soon as the sun began to sink, we set out, passing through the streets, rapidly filling with the population, just rising from their mid-day repose; even yet the air, heavy with the strong perfume, seemed as though it blew from a furnace. I daily become more convinced in travelling, that no powers of writing can ever convey a real or full impression of the scene to the mind, however minutely each detail may be described; there will always be a thousand little imperceptible circumstances acting on the senses alone, which do in fact give it its peculiar character, and yet cannot be rendered in words. Now it certainly was this aromatic scent pervading the whole atmosphere, which brought so vividly before us that we were in the East in good earnest now. It proceeded principally from the various spices, which form so universal a commodity of merchandise here, and also from the penetrating odour of flowers, altogether strange to us, rising from the numberless gardens around. The doors of all the houses were now thrown wide open, fully displaying to view a sort of vestibule or outer hall paved with white marble, and amply furnished with sofas and cushions, where each separate family assembled to amuse themselves by watching the passers-by, and have the full benefit of the evening air, in this sedentary manner. We on our part found considerable amusement in examining the successive groups, whose "interieur" was thus laid open to our view. The party was almost always much the same. Two or three young girls extremely pretty, for Smyrna is famous for its beauties, talking and laughing together in their dainty little velvet jackets and embroidered slippers. A grave old papa lazily smoking his pipe, and winking owl-like at intervals, as elderly gentlemen are apt to do, perhaps as an intimation that they also

imitate that bird for his wisdom: and an old lady seated on a great cushion, and dressed in a long fur pelisse, conversing with a kindred spirit very like herself, in a low mysterious voice, as old ladies are wont to do all the world over, according to their unalterable propensities, whether they carry on the conversation in Greek or in English.

Nothing is strange that is customary, and in Smyrna, this habit of passing the evening at the street door is so prevalent, that no one ever thinks of wondering at these family parties composedly taking their evening refreshments, and enjoying each other's society with as much ease and familiarity when thus exposed to the gaze of the whole town, as if they were in their own private rooms. What a strange effect it would have, if in our drawing-rooms in England, we were to re-place one side of the solid wall with a curtain which should be drawn up when tea was brought in, so that our enjoyment of that "social meal," might be duly appreciated by the passers-by. We enjoyed the shifting scenes of this panorama of domestic life, all through the town; and then we proceeded on by narrow quiet lanes, dark with the thick shade of the mulberry trees meeting over head, and green with the massive foliage of the prickly pear, and long clustering vines spreading themselves in wild luxuriance far beyond the limits of the low garden walls. Here we had to employ ourselves, continually darting from side to side to avoid the large Turks mounted on small asses, who, jogging stoically along, looked neither to the right nor to the left, and threatened to run us down every moment. I wonder if there is any position in life, when a Turk looks otherwise than pompous and solemn: who but one of this nation, so admirable in their compla-

cent self-sufficiency, would ever have thought of looking sublime on the back of a wretched little donkey, who would have been heavily loaded with the turban alone? I am quite sure every Turk has adopted, for himself individually, the metaphysical theory that we cannot prove the reality of any thing, except our own existence. They go through the world so completely as if all around was an unsubstantial vision, and themselves the only solid important point in the universe.

The Bridge of the Caravans, is long and narrow, built over a rapid, winding stream, and connecting the town with a much frequented road leading into the interior of the country. For this reason, it is constantly the scene of that most beautiful pageant of Eastern manners, from which it derives its name, as there is an almost unceasing succession of caravans passing over it. It is surrounded by a vast number of lofty and luxuriant trees, which renders the moving picture hourly to be seen on it, still more striking. First, distinctly heard in the intense stillness of the air, comes the low tinkle of the camel bells, and then, appearing and vanishing again among the waving branches, the long undulating procession is seen to wind along the road. As they ascend the bridge, the varied objects of striking interest, which form as a whole so picturesque a scene, are gradually displayed in slow succession; then descending on the other side, the train is lost among the green woods and projecting rocks, till, long after, it may be seen, like a dark serpent winding over the brow of the hill. At the head of the line, walks the demure and modest little donkey, leading, without bit or bridle, the whole procession, and under whose guidance alone, his magnificent companions will consent to move a step; and, meekly following him, a string of some eighteen or twenty

camels move along with slow majestic step, wreathing their long necks with their own peculiar and graceful movement, and looking with their half-shut eyes as gentle and mild, as in reality they are vicious and dangerous. The drivers who guide them by the voice alone, are mounted on their backs; the flowing draperies of their oriental dresses gathered round them, as they sit with folded arms musing thoughtfully. These men are all from the interior, true children of the desert, over whom no breath of civilisation has passed; and as they emerged from the thick wood, and one by one threw back the white bernous from their dark countenances, to examine the evening sky, there was something in the calm look with which they fixed their clear black eyes upon the pale star rising in the far horizon, that seemed to reveal to me how different must be the whole aspect of the world to them, from what it is to men who dwell in cities in contact with each other, in a thick atmosphere of humanity as it were, instead of drawing their inspirations from nature alone as these do, and that, the vast solemn nature of the desert.

I did not anticipate that this, the fashionable promenade of Smyrna, was to offer so impressive a lesson as its peculiar position must necessarily suggest to the most indifferent observer. The rushing stream which flows beneath the Bridge of Caravans, too bright and sparkling to be compared to the gloomy Styx, yet, like that fabled river, separates the living from the dead in a most singular manner; not only do its careless waters divide the souls, groping beneath the veil of the flesh in error and darkness on the confines of time, from those who have gone over the fatal brink to wake up and see clearly in the dread eternity, but those living beings are in the

eager pursuit of amusement, and full of their most busy and trifling thoughts, even in presence of those whose repose is so unchanging and so mysterious. On one side of the stream, in an open space lying at the foot of a green and vine-clad hill, the whole of the gay world of Smyrna was assembled, reposing on seats placed beneath the shade of the numerous trees, or eating ices at the doors of the little fantastic cafés erected for their accommodation; and on the other side, directly opposite, lay the beautiful Turkish cemetery, with its mournful cypresses, its gloomy shades, its silence, its sadness, and its dead. It seemed so strange to hear the shouts of laughter, and the music, and the gay voices, come sounding over the rivulet, to echo within that awful place of rest. It is true they could not disturb the dead—they could not wake the sleepers pillowed there; but could the sleepers not wake *them* from their spiritual slumber? Could that intense silence whereby the dead are so eloquent, not arouse them from the vain, the giddy, the frivolous dream, which they had made their life? Most gladly would we have turned from the dust, noise, and confusion of the living scene, to the cool deep recesses of the tranquil burial place, but the friends who were with us were anxious rather to examine the various groups before us.

These were certainly varied and singular enough. It is not every day one can see Europe and Asia eating ices together. All the Orientals were seated and silent, all the Europeans were walking about, talking and laughing, and looking exactly as Europeans do everywhere else, except that they were so thoroughly out of keeping with the landscape; the polished boots and yellow gloves, the bonnets and feathers, the cigars and fans, were quite insupportable under that gorgeous Eastern sky, and surrounded by all the strik-

ing attributes of Asiatic scenery. One lady in a blue dress and pink bonnet sat under a palm-tree, where one would have infinitely rather seen a panther or a hyena. But the Turks were inimitable, as they always are; seated in circles on their mats, with their provisions before them, for which they gave themselves an appetite, by the continual and fatiguing exercise of bowing. I wonder how many days total abstinence it would have required to have induced an Englishman to share the supper of the party whom we watched for a few minutes; for it consisted of a greasy lump of rice shaped by the hands of the principal person, whose green turban proclaimed him a descendant of the prophet, and adroitly administered by him to each one of the party in succession.

There were natives from all countries round us, but I looked in vain for what I most wished to meet, which was one of the Ghebers, or fire-worshippers. They have inspired me with a strong interest, from the account given to me of them by a friend, long resident in Persia. He told me much of the severity of their laws, and the mystery in which they envelop all their religious observances. The antiquity of their faith is of course well known to all. It is strange how many of these ancient creeds yet remain in Asia Minor, whose followers, if they be few, retain the worship of their forefathers at least in all purity, since even the system of Zoroaster, whose *ignis fatuus* light shines so very far back in the dark vista of departed ages, has yet its supporters in these countries; but I looked in vain for a Gheber. I had been told they wore a small plate of gold, inscribed with mystic characters, on their foreheads, and the only thing that looked the least like it in the dim light, was the gold band round the cap of an English midshipman.

The hill rising above us is crowned by an old ruined castle, which, while it adds to the picturesque appearance of of the town, is not in itself interesting, either from antiquity or historical tradition. Some of the party clambered up to it, but I preferred staying to watch the dispersion of the strange fantastic crowd around me. As soon as it grew dark, or rather, for it seems never to grow dark here, as soon as the flashing blue of the sky had deepened into an intense purple, and the painfully vivid glare been replaced by the soft faint starlight, the whole of the varied assembly prepared to return to their homes. The negro slaves gathered up the innumerable carpets and cushions, which they had brought for the accommodation of their Mahomedan masters, whose desire at all times to make themselves comfortable is so strong, that they regularly bivouac wherever they go, even for an hour or two. The gentlemen themselves, taking out their pretty little paper lanterns, proceed to pick their way through the lanes aided by their light, which is just sufficient to guide their own steps, and render the darkness more intense to their neighbours.

It was quite refreshing after this to meet with a party of our old friends the Greeks, who, caring nothing where or how they went, strolled mirthfully along with their arms round each other's necks, singing one of their own war songs. The Greek spoken in Smyrna is, by the way, most wretched. In Athens it is now the wish and endeavour of all the better educated class, to improve and purify the language, so as to restore it somewhat to its ancient state, and I was therefore the more struck with the poverty of the jargon spoken by the Smyrniot Greeks, full of Turkish and Italian words. On our way home, we passed an Armenian church, brilliantly lighted by the lamps which at all times hang-

before the gorgeous image of the blessed Virgin, all decked out in tinsel and gold. The exterior of the building was not in any way remarkable, and the internal arrangements are, I believe, almost similar to those of the Greek church. Madame Adele V——, with whom I was walking, gave me much information as to the Armenian religion, and she was well qualified to do so, both as a most superior person herself, and as the head of a family pre-eminent in Smyrna, as they would be everywhere, for their enlightened piety and active benevolence. I should imagine from what she told me, that this is perhaps the most superstitious and unspiritual form under which Christianity now appears anywhere, combining in itself all the abuses which have sullied other churches, and rarely giving any other aliment to the faith of its members, save outward ceremonies and unimportant observances; but still it is a Christian church, and if its light shine but feebly, it yet is shining in a land of utter and most melancholy darkness. As we walked along, we observed that most of the population betook themselves to the roofs of their houses, in order to prolong the Kef so pleasantly commenced at the Bridge of Caravans; but we were so tired when we reached Madame W——'s house, which her unremitting hospitality had desired us to consider our home, and her watchful kindness made us feel to be so indeed, that we were very glad to dine quietly, and go to rest for the night, surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries which could have been found in the most refined city in Europe.

CHAPTER VII.

Proposal to Visit a Sage Dervish—Peculiarities of the Sect—Smyrna at Six in the Morning—Traders from the Interior—The Negro Slave—Account of a Numidian musical Genius—House of Abdul Mesrour, the Sage—His Establishment—Appearance of the Wise Man—His supposed Indifference to all Things sublunary—His sly Curiosity—The Manuscript translated—His vague Ideas of Great Britain—He asks for a comprehensive Account of that Country—Mention of a Female Monarch, a Daring Imposition—His parting Blessing—Visit to a Rabbi—The Syrian Jews—The Rabbi's Wife—Visit to the Synagogue—Murder of Father Thomas—Difficulties of Admittance to the Mosque—Its Interior—Unexpected Discomfiture of a Frenchman—Oriental Refreshments.

May 3rd.

THE few lines of Arabic written by Monsieur de S——, of which he laughingly challenged me to procure a translation, have proved the means of enabling me to add a most interesting personage to my list of acquaintances, and of paying as curious a visit as I am ever likely to make. I had asked Monsieur V—— to have it translated for me, and on investigation he found there was only one person he could hear of likely to be able to read it, as Arabic is not very common here. This is a very sage and learned Dervish, so renowned for sanctity and wisdom that he is always applied to in cases of difficulty for advice or assistance. It may reasonably be supposed that when people make a mystery of any thing, it is because it will not bear investigation; and this may easily be the case with the sect of the Dervishes, the origin of whose pecu-

liar worship is not known, nor yet the precise nature of their doctrines, though they profess Mahomedanism in the abstract; but the love of the mysterious, which it must be owned is a great and even pernicious weakness, made me for this very reason take a vast interest in the sect in general, and in Abdul Mesrour, the sage in question, in particular. Monsieur V—— told me that he was not a member of any of their communities, but that he dwelt alone in a little house on the outskirts of the town, from whence he was never known to stir, conforming strictly to all the severest rules of the sect, and burying himself in profound study—he was an astronomer, an astrologer, and a mathematician, though I should have doubted the two first being compatible one with the other, and seemed to be a man of great research. Whenever any person wished to consult him, they repaired to his sanctum, and invariably found him engaged on some abstruse calculations. Monsieur V—— gave me all this account when we met in the morning, and told me he was then going to visit the wise Abdul, in order to obtain the translation. I eagerly begged to go with him if it were practicable, and he laughingly consented to my going, at least, to the house; though he felt somewhat doubtful how the venerable sage would receive the proposal of a visit from a lady, which could certainly never have been made to him before. There was something so new in the idea of visiting an astrologer before breakfast, that I was ready to run the risk of being refused admittance, and we set out about six in the morning, which was not at all an unfashionable hour for Dervish visiting.

Nothing could be more delightful than our walk through Smyrna at this early hour, both physically and morally, for it was scarcely too hot, and what there were of breezes

stirring, were deliciously fresh, and blew over a thousand flowers brought in from the country and exposed for sale; and better still, the whole European population were buried in profound slumber, while all the Asiatics were astir, crowding the streets and bazaars, and busily engaged in traffic of various kinds, for which this hour is chosen as most suitable. The scene was, therefore, far more striking than last night; and besides, our course lay in a more interesting part of the town, as we had to pass through almost all the bazaars where the shops are, and where the natives from the interior were congregated to dispose of their merchandise. Most singular were the groups which crowded round the tables of the money changers, or the stalls of the sellers of water; their gay Oriental dresses, wild gestures and appearance, and the strange language they spoke, were all so new to us. The public weigher was a man of great importance amongst them seemingly, as the peasants from the country deal chiefly in grains and spice, so that his balance was constantly requisite before a bargain could be completed. These bazaars which are, in fact, but streets built in with rough woodwork, and having open shops or stalls on either side, certainly did seem to contain every species of merchandise and goods of value from all parts of the world. Besides the gold embroidery and rich silks for which Smyrna is famous, the jewellery and magnificently mounted arms; much excited our admiration. We had several purchases to make, and we found somewhat to our annoyance, as our time was so limited, that we were expected to perform a small Kef in every shop we entered. It was in vain to talk of the article required or its price, until we had reposed on the divan, drank some coffee, smoked a pipe if we chose, and bowed a suitable number of times in return

for the shopkeeper's prayer, that the secret desire of our soul might be granted. Near a stall where my little Greek nieces were furnishing themselves with red caps, stood a negro slave holding in his hand some superb crimson carnations. I am most favourably disposed towards all Numidians, on account of a particular friend of my own who belongs to this people. He was a musical genius of wandering propensities, who invented an instrument of an entirely new description, with the half of a hollow gourd, over which was stretched a piece of tin, having for handle a split reed, and fine wires for strings; with this strange production, which was far from inharmonius, for sole companion and delight, he roamed from place to place, till he came to Greece, where I formed a friendship with him not so much for his musical talents, though I took a strange delight in his monotonous guttural song with its jingling accompaniment, as for his light heartedness, and unfailing good-humoured contentedness; he could speak no language that any one in Greece could understand, and he certainly gained very little money, yet the very smallest occurrence drew forth from him a burst of irrepressible merriment, so infectious, that all who heard him laughed in chorus without knowing why. I suppose it was a tender recollection of this original personage, which made me look with interest on the poor slave, but he suddenly came forward, and timidly, almost fearfully, offered me one of his flowers. It was quite touching to see how his dusky face beamed with delighted surprise and joy when I took it and thanked him warmly; how rare to this poor slave must have been the look of kindness for which he could be so grateful! I really think the face of a negro, when it is intelligent, is more expressive, than that of a white man can ever be; strange

as it seems to say so, the brightest smiles I have ever seen, have been upon *black* lips.

Monsieur V—— and I left the rest of the party in the drawing-room, for it cannot be called the shop, of a vendor of Broussa silks, whilst we ourselves went on to the house of Abdul Mesrour. The idea of going to call on a Dervish was quite exciting, and I greatly enjoyed my walk, though as we got down into the part of the town where Franks are seldom seen, I became rather too much an object of curiosity to the innumerable veiled women we met, whose notions of politeness, were, to say the least of it, extremely lax. Presently we left the town altogether, and came out into the open fields, from whence we could look far down into the beautiful vale of St. Anne, a green wilderness of rich luxuriant wood, which the strong light and shade of early morning now clothed in flashing brightness, now veiled in a vapoury dimness. Just where the best view of this magnificent prospect was to be obtained, the isolated dwelling of the sage was placed; a low, flat-roofed building with a wide veranda hung with mattings, which were constantly kept damp so that the air might be cooled as it passed through them.

We did not knock at the door or ring the bell, because there was no door to knock at, and no bell to ring; but Monseiur V—— clapped his hands, and instantly the heavy curtain, which hung before a low open space was lifted up, and a little negro slave appeared, who, having transmitted to his master within Monsieur V——'s request for an audience, returned immediately and admitted him to the wise man's presence. I remained meanwhile on the veranda, whilst he endeavoured, without much hope of success, to obtain permission for me to enter, and being very tired sat down on the ground on a carpet. The little negro no sooner saw this,

than he came and seated himself directly before me, and proceeded to examine me most attentively; I returned the compliment by looking steadily at him, which seemed greatly to delight him; he was a merry, comical looking creature, full of intelligence, and was dressed entirely in white, except the red cap, which was very becoming to his black face; gradually my whole appearance seemed to strike him in a most ludicrous point of view, his wide mouth expanded into a grin of uncontrollable merriment, he grimaced, made signs to me which were quite unintelligible, then looked at me again and shouted with glee; presently he rolled on his hands and feet to the other end of the veranda, and uttered some cabalistic words, which were speedily followed by the apparition of another exactly like himself; and the two together, seating themselves side by side, proceeded to demonstrate much delight and amazement, till at last my levee was interrupted by the return of Monsieur V——. He came, greatly amused, to tell me that the Dervish was in the highest state of excitement at the idea of seeing a European lady, and would on no account neglect such an opportunity of extending his researches in natural history, by seeing a specimen of a species with which he was quite unacquainted; for so determinately do the Turks maintain that women have no souls, that this learned personage could only look upon a foreign lady as we should on a curious bird or animal.

The little negroes already restored to their usual abject submission, pulled up the curtain, and passing beneath it, I found myself in the presence of Abdul Mesrour. It was a semicircular room, richly carpeted and divided in two by several steps, which raised the one half considerably above the other; the walls enclosing this upper half were solely of glass, and made it

look somewhat like a conservatory, except that instead of camelias or myrtles it contained only two most richly dressed Dervishes. The wise man, placed cross-legged on a large divan, which almost filled the entire space, sat with his long beard flowing over his folded arms, and his large turban shading a grave, stern countenance. A great box filled with curious-looking papers was beside him, and books of all kinds lay scattered about. His companion, much younger and evidently his inferior, was seated at some distance from him, smoking; the rest of the room contained only globes, and other seemingly astronomical instruments, with which I was quite unacquainted. I gave Abdul the usual oriental salutation, which he gravely returned, but he seemed to think it necessary to his dignity to manifest a supreme indifference to my presence, as though nothing sublunary, however extraordinary in its nature, could move him; at the same time the sage Dervish was evidently quite a prey to the most common of human weaknesses, for the sly glances of eager curiosity which he cast at me were most amusing.

I was allowed to sit near the steps leading up to the place of honour, and the usual preliminaries of all visits in the East commenced. The Dervish could speak no Greek, but Monsieur V—— translated our mutual compliments; and with the help of the most solemn expression of countenance I could assume, and repeatedly bowing with my hand to my lips and forehead, I seemed to be progressing rapidly in the wise man's good graces, till I unthinkingly refused a pipe, when he gave an angry start of surprise. My paper, to which I was indebted for this amusing scene, was now formally handed up to him. He read it with the greatest ease, and yet it seemed rather to puzzle him—he stroked his beard—looked at me, and

then, having ascertained from Monsieur V—— that it was written by a European wise man, he slightly elevated his eyebrows, and pronounced an emphatic "Mashallah." It just then struck me how very ludicrous it was; to make this solemn old seer so gravely transcribe these lines, which were, in fact, but an invitation to visit Monsieur de S—— and his wife in Paris, but which, given in the usual complimentary style, must have been totally incomprehensible to him. He did them, however, far more honour than their author could ever have anticipated; for having taken his writing materials from his belt, he selected a reed pen, and a piece of parchment, which he placed in the palm of his hand, and in this marvellously uncomfortable position, proceeded to write. With the greatest ease and rapidity, he produced in a few minutes an accurate translation in Turkish, Persian, and other Oriental languages, the separate characters of each most beautifully formed, which he quietly handed to me. I was delighted to possess so curious a document, and made all due acknowledgment without even having recourse to our interpreter, for I had soon discovered that our great Dervish had no inconsiderable share of vanity, which made him all the more ready to appreciate the progress I was making in the mute language of the East, which consists of a series of signs and looks varying in expression.

He now took up his pipe, and seeming to consider it high time that I should begin to make myself agreeable to him, proceeded to enter into conversation with me. Conversation in this country means catechism, and in my case it was unusually strict, for the wise Abdul evidently looked upon his visitor as a most curious study, both as an object of art and nature. He commenced by asking me how old I was? when I told him, he ejaculated "won-

derful!" whether in allusion to my extreme old age, or in astonishment that I should already have travelled so far, I cannot say. He then inquired after the health of my husband, and as I knew by experience how impossible it is here, where no young lady is unmarried after twelve or fourteen years of age, to convince him that no such person existed, I merely bowed in return, which he took as an intimation that that imaginary gentleman was in good health, and expressed himself much gratified thereby.

He now desired to be informed what country I belonged to, and I perceived, from the rather singular ideas he had formed as to the geographical position of Great Britain, that his profound astronomical researches had led him to treat the details of our own little planet with much contemptuous indifference. This, however, he seemed to think a good opportunity for obtaining some lighter instruction in an easy and familiar manner, and he therefore requested I would give him a full and particular account of the government, laws, religion, and civil institutions of England, with which he modestly acknowledged himself altogether unacquainted. Monsieur V—— laughed heartily at my look of despair when this herculean task was proposed to me; but happily I broke down at the very outset, for I failed signally in my first attempt to convince him that England was governed by a female monarch, and he was so disgusted at my trying to impose on him, in this manner, that he gave up any further inquiries. We now rose to take leave, much against his will.

It was plain he greatly preferred judging of those distant and barbarous nations by living specimens, than by the dry details of historians or travellers; having saluted him, I prepared to leave the room, when he earnestly desired me to stop for a moment—turning towards the East, he

stretched out one hand towards me, and raising the other to heaven, he pronounced upon me a solemn and emphatic blessing, with that flowery eloquence which seems habitual to all the children of these burning climes. Infidel as I was, he prayed that Allah might shed over all my days a sunshine as bright as that which now lightened the landscape round us, and that my journey to my native land, by quiet seas and pleasant paths, might be an emblem of my voyage through life, as stormless and serene.

Blessings and maledictions are so liberally bestowed in these countries, that I have often had reason to remember gladly that "the curse causeless shall not come." I now begin to hope that all those which it has been my lot to receive, will at least counteract each other, and leave me uninjured if unprofited. I was solemnly anathematised by an old woman on my first arrival in Greece, because I did not make the sign of the cross when the funeral of her son went past, not knowing that such was the custom of the country; and just the other day, when I was desired to announce to a woman servant that she was not to receive more than three times her due, she went down on her knees, and prayed that I might never sleep again, and that the sea on which I was about to embark might swallow me up, so as to put a speedy termination to my sufferings; but then, to neutralise this, I know that a huge taper is burning even now before the Panajia in the church of Tenos, placed there on my behalf by a kind-hearted old widow, and the gardener's wife daily supplicates for me that I may be converted to the Greek church, not that she supposes I am in danger as a heretic, for it is wonderful how tolerant even the most ignorant are in Greece, but she told me herself that her desire is that we should be in the same abode hereafter, which, unless I changed,

she is assured could not be the case, as I must be in a different paradise.

Having responded to Abdul's prayer by hoping he might have every thing he could possibly desire, now and ever, which is a remarkably safe wish, we left the house, receiving a parting grin from the little negro, who I am sure would be wholly unfit to go through his duties with the requisite solemnity for some days to come. Our morning calls were not yet over, though it was growing unfashionably late, as it was seven o'clock. Monsieur V— kindly took me to visit a Jewish Rabbi, a friend of his own, whom he hoped would consent to show me the synagogue.

Most deeply interesting as all connected with the Hebrew people must ever be, nowhere, I think, is our attention more forcibly arrested than by the Syrian Jews. Wherever they are to be found, we know well that this race is a palpable and ever-continuing miracle set forth before our eyes, chosen, kept apart, distinct from all others; they are as it were a written scroll, where all who run, may read of judgment and of mercy. Still, from generation to generation, alike in lands that are shrouded in a moral darkness and in those blessed with the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness, the Hebrews dwell alone unchanged, with that veil upon their hearts which I verily believe, in spite of many and holy efforts no hand of man shall ever remove.

Although, mercifully, in our enlightened days, they are no longer the persecuted and oppressed people, they are yet in many parts of Europe despised and disliked for the character which is perhaps justly attributed to them of meanness and avarice. But all Jews whom I have seen in the East are of a totally different stamp, especially those of Asia. I know not if it is that they are nearer to the holy scenes

consecrated by the mute records of that mysterious dispensation, so glorious in its aim and end, beneath which their forefathers dwelt, that constrains them here to walk worthily as sons of Abraham.

It may be that but to see in the far distance the snow-crowned lofty peaks which once shook with the thunders of Sinai, or to turn in the direction of their own Jerusalem, which they wait to see arise in regenerated glory, at His command for whom they look with darkened eyes, does indeed purify their thoughts and heart; but certainly all whom I have known in those countries would seem to bear the stamp of their high calling, at once in their lofty appearance, and their reserved and dignified manners. Their fixed, I may say unconquerable hope of the speedy advent of the Messiah, whose glory they are to share, casts a holy solemnity over all the details of their existence, and the consciousness of their great destiny renders them mild and indulgent to all they deem less highly favoured than themselves.

In none have I seen these distinctive features of the Syrian Jews so strongly displayed as in the Rabbi whom I visited to-day. He met us at the door of his house, which is quite in the oriental style, and singularly picturesque; and bid me welcome in Romaic, which he spoke with great fluency. I do not think I ever saw a person more strikingly prepossessing. He was tall, noble, and dignified in appearance, and wore the black cap and ample robe of the Jewish priest, with an inner garment of purple silk. There is nothing more attractive than a solemn, thoughtful expression on a youthful face; and whilst his fair complexion and long golden hair, so unlike the generality of his race, gave him an appearance of extreme youth, there was the record of much deep thought in the lines that marked so strongly his lofty forehead, and an impressive seriousness in his mild eye and

grave sweet smile. It was impossible not to be much struck with him.

There are some persons in this world whose presence seems to produce a very atmosphere of repose, whose own internal and holy calm would appear to act with an unseen influence on souls more worldly and more restless, putting to shame their vain strife and stormy passions. The Rabbi seemed to me to be such an one. His manners, though courteous, were so quiet and reserved; and his voice, peculiarly sweet and low, never varied in its intonation on whatever subject he conversed. He conducted us into a hall, one end of which was a single immense window opening on a flight of marble steps, which led into one of the loveliest gardens imaginable; fountains, trellised walks, and plants of every description were crowded within its narrow limits; the acacias and clustering vines, had even pushed their way into the room, and heavy bunches of rich fruit hung in profusion over our heads, mingling with the sweetest flowers.

The Rabbi begged us to recline on the low divans placed near the open window, while his wife prepared coffee; the invariable inferiority of all women to their husbands in the East was strikingly developed in the young Jewess, who, though beautiful, was altogether devoid of the intellectual expression which so strongly characterised the Rabbi. She had quite the countenance of a Rebecca, and her light green turban gave great effect to her jet black hair and eyes. The Rabbi offered us all the refreshments himself, with a sort of dignified courtesy; but he seemed little disposed to converse, and, unlike my last reverend and loquacious host, asked no questions whatever; nor did his wife, which was still more extraordinary.

After a short visit, he conducted us to the syna-

gogue, which was in the same court as his house, and with which I was most grievously disappointed.

I do not know if the former building which occupied the same place, and was destroyed in a recent conflagration, was at all more worthy to be the Hebrew place of worship than this which has only lately replaced it; but I could well understand the reason of the Rabbi's mournful countenance as he led us through it, when I remembered that in this mean and shabby edifice he had to read of the glory of the Temple, even in its latter days.

The building was low, though of considerable size. We ascended a few steps, and entered a large square room with a vaulted roof, lighted by two high narrow windows; every thing within it was made of new wood, for the most part quite uncovered, which seemed principally to give it this poor and shabby appearance. Seats were ranged all round it, and in the centre stood a small enclosed platform, where alone some attempt at embellishment had been made. The railings were hung with crimson velvet, and a small table and reading-desk were covered with the same material. On the table was placed a splendid copy of the Pentateuch, and various scrolls, with branching candlesticks of massive silver; of these there were several, placed in different parts of the room. The Rabbi unlocked an iron chest, and took out the garments worn by the High Priest on great solemnities to show us. They were most magnificent, and corresponded in all points to the minute directions respecting them given in Scripture. At one end of the room there were some objects concealed by a curtain, which the Rabbi gently requested no one would approach, and I did not like even to inquire what they were. It did not take long to complete our review of this humble synagogue, and we then took leave of the young and interesting Rabbi.

There was a very unfavourable feeling manifested towards the Jews in this part of the world some time since. A story was fabricated at Damascus, that they made use of human blood in baking their cakes for the Passover, and did not scruple to commit murder in order to obtain it. The disappearance from that town of a Roman Catholic priest, a certain Father Thomas, the mystery of whose fate has, I believe, never been revealed, was attributed to them, solely from this horrible supposition. It created great disturbance at the time, and, indeed, is still believed by some.

We found our friends rather tired of the complimentary silk-merchant, in whose drawing-room they had passed the interval of our long absence, and we now all proceeded in the direction of the largest mosque, the interior of which we had a great desire to see, I think purely out of a spirit of contradiction—because, in Smyrna, no woman is allowed to enter there—for we well knew, that at Constantinople we should visit as many as we pleased, where they are far less strict in those matters than at Smyrna. Monsieur V—— was again very doubtful if he could gratify our curiosity, by obtaining permission for us to pass the usual limits assigned to infidels; but from his success in the former instance, and his knowledge of the Turkish language and customs, we had some hopes that it might be managed.

Scarcely had we passed the outer court surrounding the mosque, where a number of Mussulmen were performing their ablutions at a fountain, previous to entering within the sacred precincts, when several men, apparently functionaries connected with the mosque, rushed towards us to impede our further progress. Monsieur V— — now used all his eloquence to obtain

leave for us to visit the interior of the great building that looked so invitingly oriental, with its domes and tapering minarets; but for some time quite in vain. At last one of them went into a house, and returned with a good-natured looking old mollah, who, after some further parley, consented to our entering, provided we would take off our shoes altogether, and not even replace them with slippers. To this I, for one, readily consented, but I entered the mosque alone in consequence, as no other of the party would undertake thus to do penance on the stone steps, which I first ascended.

I then found myself in a vast building, divided into three parts, the vaulted roof of each one forming a separate dome. The two side compartments were reserved, seemingly, for the worshippers, and contained a considerable number of the faithful in the posture of prayer, their foreheads bent to the ground; that in the centre, to which a few steps descended, was quite empty, and entirely covered with those beautiful little carpets so much prized everywhere. On the roof, in a large circle of golden letters, were inscribed the seven names of Allah, and suspended from it by a long chain were innumerable little glass lamps, mingled with all sorts of fantastic ornaments, such as horses' tails, ostrich eggs, &c. In the direction of Mecca was a somewhat shabby representation of the prophet's tomb, and a kind of pulpit, from whence the Koran is daily read.

My progress through the mosque was slow from the circumstance, that in spite of the proverbial difficulty of disturbing a moslem at his devotions, every single individual no sooner saw me than he flew towards me, and insisted on my holding out my foot, that he might be quite sure no workmanship of a profane cobbler had

desecrated the sacred ground. When satisfied on this score, there ensued, of course, a routine of a salaming, which occupied some time. Even then they looked rather sulky at my audacity, though the presence of the mollah, under whose protection I was there, prevented them from displaying their anger. They had soon, however, an opportunity of showing what they felt, of which they took advantage rather amusingly.

One of the passengers on board of our steamer, passing the open door of the mosque, saw me within, and supposing it to be one of the public sights, very coolly ascended the steps and was about to walk in, never dreaming that any objection would be made either to himself or his dusty boots; scarce did he appear composedly at the door, when a man who was sweeping the carpets, perceiving an unprotected individual, uttered a yell of rage, which elicited a simultaneous response from all present; then suddenly seizing hold of an immense long pole which stood near, I do believe for the very purpose, he ran frantically at the intruder with it, in the most ferocious manner, and so terrified and astonished the unfortunate man, that he started back and tumbled down the stairs, having just time to give vent to one wild "misericorde" as he disappeared in a whirlwind of dust.

I also left the mosque, rather more composedly, and as we were now all very tired, Monsieur V—— insisted that we should complete our adventures by going, in the true eastern fashion, to rest in the shop of a vendor of sweetmeats, who would furnish us with sherbet and all manner of delicacies, for which they are so famous. We proceeded, accordingly, to one of the most inviting of these

open stalls, and took our places on the platform intended for that purpose. There was some difficulty as to seats, of which there were none; and several of our party obstinately refused to sit *à la Turc* in the open street. At last these refractory persons were accommodated with empty boxes, much to our entertainer's amazement, who evidently thought this a marvellous expedient for the more natural mode of reposing, and we proceeded to partake of his refreshments, consisting principally of sugar and honey in every different shape.

We greatly enjoyed this thoroughly oriental episode; we were served by a fierce little old Turk with a tremendous beard, quite the man to put pepper in one's cream tart any day; and the wooden enclosure of his stall became the natural frame to a living picture formed by the scene without, which would have made the fortune of a painter, could it have been transferred to canvass. The corner of an old house of the true Byzantine architecture, with a palm tree waving over it, formed the background; and in front, a group of traders from the interior stood discussing the price of a young camel, their dusky faces and piercing black eyes glowing with excitement, and their arms emphatically stretched out, causing their garments to fall around them in picturesque folds.

We had a long way to go before we reached the house of our much esteemed friend the consul for Holland, where we were to lunch before going on board; and the heat was so intense that we could scarcely walk. It was in vain that the air was still laden with the odour of spice, it had altogether lost its invigorating freshness, and the most singular costumes could scarce attract our attention,

pursued as we were by the unrelenting rays of a tremendous sun. Our sufferings were, however, soon forgotten when we found ourselves surrounded by all the comforts of Monsieur V——'s beautiful house, and whilst enjoying the society of one of the most charming and delightful families to be found anywhere. I really could scarcely believe when I found myself quietly seated at lunch in a perfectly English dining room, that I had not been dreaming of all these dervishes and mollahs.

CHAPTER VIII.

Departure from Smyrna—The Passengers assemble to tell their Adventures—Ride on a Dromedary—Wonderful Feats of the Mad Doctor—Singular Romance, in Real Life—Story of the Smyrniot Widow—Island of Mytelene—Antiquity hallows even Crime—Modern Amazons of Lesbos—Rapid Successions of Scenes of Interest—Beaten Track—Inevitable Disappointment of the Traveller—Alexandria Troas—Relic of the Apostolic Age—Tumuli—Tomb of the Queen of the Amazons—The Straits—Galipoli—Sunset in the Sea of Marmora—Permanent Good to be derived from Foreign Travelling—Power of Judging of the Actual Moral State of the World—The Spirit of the Age—It Springs from the Past—Prophecies of the Future—The Nations must be viewed in Connexion with each other—Analysis to be drawn from the whole Spead of Infidelity—Results of Prejudice—Power of Individuals to advance the Cause of Truth.

At three o'clock we once more traversed the long Street of Roses, and re-embarked on board of the steamer, quitting Smyrna with feelings of regret, which would have been inadmissible, attractive as this gate of the East has ever seemed to me, had we not at the same time been leaving many and dear friends. We were soon under way, and as we moved slowly out of the vast harbour, the beautiful panorama receded before us, changing like the shifting scenes of a theatre. The crowded quay, the mosques, the houses with their gardens mingling together, grew into a confused and glittering mass, where, as it lay on the steep hill-side, the buildings of the city seemed to rise fantastically piled one upon another—the cypress grove became confounded with the sweeping shadows—the old

castle was lost among the rocks and trees—and finally, as we rounded the point, the deep green hills closed altogether round the fair city—as though, having opened to display her to us, they now gathered her again to their breast, and hid her for ever from our view.

At last there was nothing round us but a huge polished mirror, glaring in the strong light like burnished steel; and, the passengers gathering together under the awning, each one was called upon to give an account of the manner in which they had spent the period of their short stay at Smyrna. Madame T——, whose almond-shaped eyes and long masses of magnificent hair were not the only points in which she showed herself a true oriental, honestly confessed that she had found Smyrna as good a place for a Kef as any other; indeed, particularly adapted to that occupation on account of the excellence of the coffee, which had been brought to her from time to time as she reclined half asleep on the sofa, from whence she never stirred. Monsieur C—— was determined, *coute qui coute*, that since he was actually in Asia, he would take a ride on a dromedary.

Having persuaded the younger of his two companions, much against his will, to join him in his expedition, he hired two dromedaries for the day, and the pair set off at a pace they could noways control, on one of the country roads; but they soon found that the heavy sea and natural ground-swell of the day before were nothing to the pace of their montures; and before they had been shaken for half an hour, till every bone ached, they were otherwise so exceedingly uncomfortable, that they agreed to tumble off as best they could, and proceeded on foot to a little *café* at the road-side, where they sat down to smoke, with a party of genuine Mussulmen. They had found their society so very amus-

that they had remained here the whole day. Monsieur C—— assured us he had enlarged their minds by giving them a clear and comprehensive notion of civilised life. He had sung to them, he had waltzed before them; he had put his own coat on one of them for a few minutes, and made him walk about in it; and finally, he had presented them with his own and his companion's yellow kid gloves.

The Greek professor and Monsieur de S—— had, I think, taken the most sensible course of any, having hired a comfortable carriage, and gone quietly out through the most striking scenery to the beautiful village of Bournaba, where they had an opportunity of seeing something of the country and returning by a different road. Very marvellous, indeed, was the account the mad doctor gave of his adventures; the activity and surprising ease with which he seemed to have transported himself from place to place were quite wonderful; wherever any of us had been, there he had been also; finally, hearing me say how much I regretted not having had time to go to Ephesus, and not catching up the words quite distinctly, he bowed across the deck to me and said how sorry he was he had not been in time to breakfast with me there, among the sublime ruins of the temple of Diana.

Before taking leave of Smyrna altogether, I must try to record a very strange romance of real life connected with it, which lately came under my observation; the details are indeed so very dramatic that I should not myself have been disposed to believe them, had not I been actually called upon to act a part in the tragedy, for such it was.

There dwelt a year or two ago in the lowest and worst part of Smyrna, a poor old widow; so poor, that her sole means of subsistence was, by going out when the

dangerous heat of the day was over, to search the plains by moonlight for a certain herb, whose medicinal qualities procured her, by its sale, a few paras. She was a native of the Island of Samos, and showed, both in manners and language, that she had not always been so deserted and so wretched; but it was not for herself alone, that, night after night, this aged woman went forth to dig with her weak hands in the hard parched earth, that yielded her so unwillingly even this poor means of subsistence, with none to look on her patient labour but the far-distant, mildly beaming stars, and but scanty covering to shield her withered limbs from the poisoned night dews, or protect them from the sting of the angry serpent, as it rustled from its lair at her approach.

She had a daughter, an only child, whose whole appearance and mode of expression gave evidence still more than the mother, of their having formerly been in a very different position. It was evident that Mariora had once been strikingly beautiful; but now, more like a breathing phantom than a living being, she lay in the last stage of a hopeless consumption; and there was something more than the traces of sickness, deadly as it was, to be discerned in this poor wasted perishing creature. The old woman wept and wrung her hands, when their scanty provision of food failed altogether; and she sat on the ground wailing and covering her head with dust, when a violent fit of coughing had so shaken the exhausted frame of her child that she lay for hours like one about to expire; but to Mariora herself, their poverty and wretchedness seemed utterly indifferent, and if ever a smile passed over her livid lips, is was when some new symptom showed how, day by day, the cold grasp of death was tightening on her heart, soon to check, as nothing else could, its restless beatings.

There dwelt ever on that pallid face an expression of hopeless misery, which lay deeper far than that which could have been caused by the pangs of want, however sharp; and misery like this renders the grave, to one who, weak and ignorant, looks not beyond it, the very Eden of despair.

But though the daughter prayed for death, the mother would not see her die. An old Armenian doctor lived near them, and by tears and entreaties, which she vainly substituted for the gold that alone would have induced him to render them any permanent assistance, she persuaded him once, at least, to give his opinion of Mariora. He said, without hesitation, that if anything could do her good, it would be a voyage at sea. With the sickly fancy of a dying person, the idea seemed to captivate the imagination of poor Mariora; she declared that the fresh sea breezes would indeed revive her, and from that hour ceased not to implore her mother to take her away.

Poor old woman! how was she to find the means, even to save her darling's life, of procuring her that change which so many thousands daily seek for mere amusement? But it were easier to quell the courage of the stoutest warrior, than to daunt a mother's heart. As soon as she saw that the weary, restless sufferer had turned with such earnest longing to this new hope, she calmly bid her cease her peevish repining, and trust to her that her wishes should be gratified; and then, strong only in her unconquerable love, the friendless and penniless widow went forth to seek some means of fulfilling her promise. She drew her mourning veil over her head, and signed herself with the sign of the cross as she passed the threshold, in token that her trust was in Providence alone; for however much of ignorance and superstition there may be in the religion of the lower orders amongst the Greeks, they, not the less,

have recourse to it, on all occasions, for comfort and support; and threading her way, unprotected and alone, through the busy streets, she went down to the harbour, which was crowded with vessels preparing to sail in various directions. Caring nothing for their destination, the widow now commenced a weary pilgrimage, going from ship to ship and asking, for the dear love of Heaven, that she might be allowed but to lay her dying child on a corner of the deck, where she would molest no one, and could inhale the life-giving breezes of the wave—one after another refused this meek petition, but at last her despair grew so powerful, for the voice of misery is unrivalled in its eloquence, that finally her prayers and tears subdued even the hard heart of a rough Hydriot captain, and he consented to grant her request.

He was to sail that very evening. With the assistance of a few of the neighbours, who, true to human nature, having left her to perish by inches whilst among them were now ready enough to help her to remove her misery from their sight, she conveyed her daughter on board, and established her in the shade of a rough awning on the open deck, for the soft night air of that delicious climate could not injure even her delicate frame. It was not until long after they had started, that the widow thought of asking their destination, and found that they were bound for Athens. During the voyage, lengthened by contrary winds, the old Armenian's opinion seemed fully verified, and Mariora improved both in health and spirits; but the fictitious strength vanished as soon as she was removed from the invigorating influence of the sea, and they had not been a week at Athens before she was worse than ever; their prospects also seemed, if possible, darker than before, for the poor old woman knew of no means what-

ever of gaining her subsistence here. It was at this juncture that I heard of their desolate position, and soon took a great interest in them. The old woman gradually acquired the habit of coming to me constantly, were it but that she might relieve her aching heart by talking of her daughter, and asking me again and again, if I thought there was any improvement; it was very painful, knowing as I did how hopeless was the case, to listen to the poor mother's alternations of hope and fear. One day she would come with eyes glistening with hope and joy to tell me Mariora had slept several hours, and that a tinge of colour had restored to her marble face a gleam of its former beauty; and at another time, weeping and wringing her hands, she would repeat the bitter words of the sufferer, when she asked her not to go so often to the church to pray for her recovery in case her prayers were heard. I had often a great curiosity to ascertain the cause of this hopelessness of misery, but I did not venture to inquire into their history as long as the old woman was silent on the subject; for surely the feelings and the sorrows of the poor ought more than any to be held sacred.

At last, one day, she came to me bringing with her a little tin box, which she said contained papers she believed to be of value, if she but knew how to use them; and she wished me to ascertain in what language they were written, at least, if my science went no further. I opened the box, and found to my utter surprise a number of deeds of various kinds written in pure English, but before examining them further she volunteered to tell me her history, which I had become doubly anxious to hear. She was as I have said a native of the Island of Samos, her husband had been a landed proprietor there, and he had died some twelve or

fourteen years before, leaving her in tolerably comfortable circumstances. She had no other child but this one daughter, then a most lovely girl of fifteen. It so chanced that about this period an English frigate was stationed off the island, and the young commander having met with Mariora several times became so strongly attached to her, that when he was ordered to leave Samos he persuaded her to become his wife, and to accompany him henceforward wherever his roving life might lead him. Mariora returned his affection not only with the vehemence which characterises such feelings in the East, but with all the ardour of a first attachment; she followed him right willingly, for assuredly she would not have survived a separation; her mother also, who had none but her on earth, accompanied them, whilst for two years, his ship cruised about in the neighbouring islands. Finally, he was ordered to remain stationary at Smyrna, and he took a house for them there, furnished with every imaginable luxury, where they established themselves for six months.

At the end of that period, he was once more ordered away on an expedition of a nature which rendered it impossible for them to follow him. The old woman did not know where he had gone, but it would seem that he had anticipated either a prolonged absence or a service of some danger, as, before his departure, he gave her the box of papers, which I now held in my hand, and told her that if he should not have returned in a year from that time, she was to suppose him dead, since death alone should prevent his return. In that case she would find that by these deeds he had made ample provision for his Mariora. He left them more than enough to live comfortably, till the period he had specified; and then took his departure, bearing with him the very heart and soul of his young Greek

wife. The long lingering year was passed by Mariora in that weary, feverish impatience, which needs no description to be understood by all who have known what it is to mark out some day for good in that future which may never dawn for them. Is there one of us, indeed, who has not at some time madly delivered up his soul to one great hope or fear, and day by day wished away those hours never to be redeemed? forgetting how, as we lengthen or shorten them by the magic of our own feelings, they yet in awful reality are steadily bearing us on to the tomb and to an inevitable ordeal beyond it. At last the dreary interval passed away, and half the allotted period elapsed again in an unchanging solitude, before Mariora and her mother dared even to own to each other the fear that was gnawing both their hearts. No news whatever had reached them since the day of his departure, and, strange to say, hope seems to have begun to fail sooner in the young heart than in that of the care-worn old woman; but there is something instinctively prophetic connected with a true affection, and from the very first hour on which he left her, Mariora had a presentiment that she should see her husband no more.

The old widow, in addition to the torturing suspense which solely engrossed her daughter, had the misery of seeing their provision, which she had eked out as long as she could, about to fail altogether, with no resource against absolute want in a town where she was a perfect stranger. Imagining, poor creatures, that if he should return, he would not be able to find them if they quitted the spot where he had left them, they would not leave the house which had been the scene of poor Mariora's short-lived happiness, until, when every article of furniture had been sold out of it to procure them food, she wandered about in the bare, de-

serted rooms like a ghost revisiting a scene of departed joys; and, finally, she who had so lately been the idolised wife of one she loved too well, was actually turned into the street without pity. They were now reduced to inhabit a wretched kind of hovel; and the old woman anxious, at least, that all uncertainty should be at an end, bethought her of applying to the English consul for information respecting her son-in-law. In this she succeeded but too well; he supplied her at once with accurate details concerning his death, which had taken place some months before. What would not the poor widow have given, as she went home to impart the news to her daughter, for yet one hour of the suspense which could be theirs no more! Mariora listened to all she had to say like a living statue; and when her mother's last words, half choked in sobs, extinguished for ever the last spark of that hope which was her life, with one long despairing shriek she flung herself upon the ground, veiling with her long dishevelled hair the eyes that never more desired to see the light of day.

From this spot her mother found it impossible to move her for days to come: she refused to speak or eat, but lay there a practical illustration of the poetical term, of one crushed to the earth with misery. I could well believe the widow's account of her daughter's passionate despair, I had seen so many instances of it among the fiery Greeks. Their religion, as I have said, is sincere as far as it goes; but they seldom practically comprehend its tremendous truths. Any one who thoroughly realises the certainty of an eternal and personal existence beyond the tomb, can never know positive despair for the fading of any earthly hope, but to them life is indeed all in all, and they therefore abandon themselves to a grief as immoderate as it is terrible,

when the joy of that life is taken from them. There is no more fatal disease than a deeply-rooted and hopeless sorrow; that of Mariora destroyed her altogether; she fell into a consumption, and a few years, dragged on in mental and bodily suffering, brought this hapless pair to the period when I first knew them.

When the old woman, with many tears, had concluded her story, I began to look through the papers. The first was a deed regularly drawn out, by which Captain Charles O—, commanding H. M. S.——, in the event of his death, settled on his wife Mariora Yanakina, an annuity of 200*l.* sterling per annum. As far as my knowledge in such matters went, this sum of comparative wealth was quite legally insured to the poor creatures who had so long been wasting away in absolute want, and I asked the old woman how it happened that she had never made any use of it; she answered that she had taken the papers to a lawyer in Smyrna, who, having examined them, offered to arrange it all for her if she would give him twenty drachmas, about fifteen shillings. The widow did not possess half this miserable sum, and if she had it must have been used to put bread into the mouth of her child; and the mean, cold-hearted man had actually the sordid cruelty to send her back to struggle with the most abject poverty, whilst he knew she had the means of living in comfort beside her.

Not wishing to raise the poor woman's hopes too much, I bid her leave the papers with me, and sent for a lawyer to examine them; he at once said the deeds were perfectly legal, and that there could be no difficulty in putting Mariora in possession of this little fortune, which was settled as a life-rent on her. When he had fairly undertaken to realise the money, I sent for the poor widow, to tell her of the bright prospects opening out for her; not

only would they now be comfortably situated, but I almost hoped that with the aid of better physicians, and a few of the luxuries of life, something might yet be done for poor Mariora. To my surprise, the widow did not obey my summons, and for several days I saw nothing of her; I then sent again, and a few hours after she appeared, but so changed that for a moment I could scarce believe it was herself. A large mourning veil covered her from head to foot; her grey hair, torn out in many places, hung loose on her shoulders; and her face and neck bore the fresh traces of the wounds she had inflicted on herself, in pursuance of the Greek customs at funeral ceremonies. I did not require her burst of despair to understand the truth—Mariora was dead—she had died at the very time when I had completed the arrangements for placing her in possession of the annuity, which, of course, expired with her, and which had so long been useless. It was certainly a strange and romantic tale to have really occurred under my own observation.

We had an opportunity of witnessing, this evening, the sight so much commented on, of Turks at their evening devotions. Just as the sun set, seven of them spread their carpets on the deck near to us, and went through their evolutions very deliberately. It is customary to admire the unfailing impassibility with which they perform their religious duties in whatever place or society they may be, but I own I could not help fancying I perceived a great deal of ostentatious devotion amongst those before us.

May 4th.

The first object of interest that met our eyes on coming on deck this morning, was the fine bold outline of the Island of Mytelene or Lesbos, towards which we were ex-

pected to feel an interest on account of its connexion with the name of Sappho, so pertinaciously remembered by us all, however little she may have deserved it. It is a strange thing how antiquity will hallow even crime, and with what submissive enthusiasm we talk of some of the heroes of these ancient days, whom we might indeed find it difficult to match in the present time, but only for their cunning, or fraud, or cold-blooded cruelty. Lesbos seemed beautifully green and fertile. It has a claim with many other spots in this part of the world, to having been the country of the famous Amazons; and whatever is not positively fabulous in the account given of them, may well have had its origin here; for the island is even now inhabited by ladies, whose masculine propensities it would do Mrs. Hugo Reid's* heart good to see. The women of Mytelene inherit the landed property, manage the family affairs, and I have been even told that they go out to hunt, and ride on horseback, whilst the men sit at home cooking and spinning.

The whole of to-day's sail, replete with classical interest, crowds into a few hours so many localities, whose well-known names call up a host of associations, that it has already been described and re-described in most minute detail by every fresh visitor. Yet, despite of the eloquent accounts which have been given of the whole of this now beaten tract, from Lesbos to the Sea of Marmora, I question if even the most enthusiastic traveller who first has hailed in delight the far distant shadowy Island of Tenedos, till called on to gloat with eager eyes on the plain of the Scamander, where the actual site of Troy itself is visible (to his mind's eye at least), I question if even such a worshipper of the past as this, would be exempt from the un-

* Authoress of the "Rights of Woman."

comfortable feeling of disappointment, which I think must be shared by all at the end of the day, when it has been palpably brought before them that the whole kingdom of Troy was comprised in limits that would only be the reasonable proportion for a gentleman's estate in England—that the tomb of Achilles, round which the great Alexander is said to have danced and wept, is a little green knoll almost imperceptible in the sandy plain—that, in short, all these famous events of a period so distant and so little known, that they are but solitary beacons in a great darkness, have taken place within a space, which now seems strangely insignificant in extent to us.

It is impossible, when we verify all this with our own eyes, not to feel somewhat as though we had been taken in all our life, remembering the grand impressions of our childhood concerning them. Still it was with no small delight that we established ourselves on deck on this bright morning, that we might not lose a single feature in the remarkable landscape passing rapidly before us. The wind was so high, that we could not stand upright; but having arranged a sort of tent in a sheltered part of the steamer, Monsieur de S—— declared that nothing could be more enviable than our position. We had made ourselves thoroughly comfortable, *à la Turc*, with carpets and cushions; our eyes were to be feasted all day by a succession of scenes of the most unequivocal interest; and if we did not feel disposed to perform all the necessary raptures of enthusiasm, the American party were there to do it for us, who, standing directly so as to intercept the view to every one else, duly and learnedly descanted on every place we passed.

The town of Alexandria Troas, which we passed quite close, though small and unimportant, had an interest for

us as the spot where St. Paul mentions having left his cloak; but indeed the whole of the Asiatic coast is hallowed by that great apostle's footsteps. The word in the ancient Greek, which has been translated "cloak," is exactly the same as that used in the present day to denominate the outer garment or robe of black cloth worn by the Greek priests. This might lead us almost to believe that in respect to the clerical dress, as well as in various other points, the Greek Church has preserved the primitive customs of the apostolic age quite intact.

I do not know if the distance were deceptive, but it seemed to me as though the tumuli of Ajax, Patrocles, and Achilles, were singularly small; all that I have seen in Greece are much larger; there is one especially which is very ancient, called the tomb of the queen of the Amazons, in the plain leading to the Phalerum Bay, which is quite a little hill; it was opened not long since, but contained only a few vases, I believe, and nothing of any value. The whole of the scenery to-day was very lovely, independent of its other charms, especially where, as we approached the straits, the European and Asiatic shores, both so beautiful though so different, draw close together, and the quiet waters of the Dardanelles, coming winding out from the hills above Abydos, rush on between the two castles that face one another, as they keep guard over their respective portions of the globe, and sweep on rapidly to the Archipelago. Europe and Asia do certainly seem strangely near to one another, during the mile which intervenes between the castles bearing their name, and those of Sestos and Abydos. At this point, the Americans produced Lord Byron's works, and prepared to talk about Leander, much to the edification of the mad doctor, who forced them to translate the whole of their learned dis-

cussion into miserable French. In the afternoon, we anchored for half-an-hour before the town of Gallipoli, standing at the head of the Hellespont on the European side, and directly opposite to the ancient Lampsacus. It is rather an unimportant town, not containing above three thousand inhabitants, but to us it was rendered interesting by the novel appearance of the natives, and the singular construction of the streets. After passing this point, the Hellespont grows rapidly wider, till a few miles further on it opens into the Sea of Marmora.

The wind had lulled completely, and it was quite evening as we entered on what is certainly the gem of oceans. I could not have conceived any thing more beautiful than this miniature sea, lying with its clear waters, still and limpid as those of an inland lake, and the green hills closing round it in so perfect a circle. Comparatively small as is this fairy ocean, we seem to have made but little way over its pure, quiet breast, before night fell altogether; but I was very glad that my last night at sea in the East should have been in so beautiful a scene, in order to leave me a favorable impression of what I think the most lovely aspect in which nature can appear, at least in this part of the world. The evening had now become perfectly tranquil and serene, without which that majesty of repose, which characterises a cloudless oriental sky at sunset, would have been destroyed.

There is a very strange effect, which I have often observed produced at sea in these latitudes by the total absence of twilight, causing the night to succeed to sunset with such extreme rapidity. When the gorgeous fiery sun has been ingulphed in a perfect flood of golden light, it does not seem as though by withdrawing his glowing rays he abandoned the heavens to gloom, but rather as though that pure, spotless sky were suddenly become the field of a

mighty combat between day and night for the empire of a few short hours, in which night is the conqueror: for, even in presence of the glorious pageantry of the sunset, she seems to arise just opposite from the heaving bosom of the deep, strong in the power of her intense gloom, and, gathering the darkness round her as a mourner robes herself in her sable garments, she appears to ascend the calm blue vault, while, as she passes over the face of heaven, the sunbeams recede before her conquering steps, and retire within the luminous west, where the last smile of the departed day gradually fades and expires; and then, beneath her feet, star on star springs into light, waxing bolder and brighter as her kingdom is more firmly established, till every moment her deepening shadows bring forth more glorious worlds. The same scene precisely is enacted on the still bosom of the sea, where, as in a mirror, the reflected sunset is devoured by reflected night, that creeps from wave to wave with an irresistible power.

I think any one who has once beheld it could never forget this singular aspect of the Eastern sunset, where night seems thus suddenly to rise and extinguish day, instead of as in our not less lovely and lingering twilight, where slowly and sadly the blessed light departs to leave the fair world, where it loved to smile, to the soft shadows gradually stealing down from heaven long after the sun has disappeared.

My enjoyment of this beautiful sight, as I lay muffled up in a cloak on a corner of the deck, was broken in upon by having my attention suddenly arrested, and my interest roused to listen to an animated conversation amongst several of the passengers seated near me. It was a group of three or four men of different nations, the subject of their discussion some of the profoundest questions on the origin, purpose, and, above all, final end of man's exist-

ence, each one bringing to bear on these his own pre-conceived opinions, individual errors of judgment, or accepted prejudices, and amongst these were an atheist, a deist, and a materialist.

There is no consequence resulting from a residence in various different countries, which can have a deeper interest to inquiring minds, than the opportunity thus afforded of coming in contact with men holding every different doctrine which it is possible to imagine, displaying indeed but too widely the distinctive shades of almost universal error. If there is any permanent and important good to be drawn from foreign travel, from the facilities we now possess of leaving our own country, to wander to and fro on the earth, and return to give the result of our observations, and our opportunities of acquiring knowledge, it is from the power thus given us of judging of the actual state of the world, morally and intellectually. Its physical features change not. Pausanias and Thucydides describe the same localities in the same terms in which modern travellers descant upon them, but the destinies of the human race, swayed by an inscrutable Providence, are steadily working on to their predetermined consummation; and each generation, as it passes over the earth, and goes hence to bear its testimony of the progress of the work, has been stamped with its distinctive character and seal; therefore, in taking an enlarged view of the spirit of the age, in connexion with the past of which it is the offspring or result, we may teach it to prophesy truly to us of that future which it shall itself influence and colour.

But this view is not to be obtained seated by our own fire-sides; we must go from place to place and from country to country, reading the nations, with their various religions and social systems, not singly but in con-

nexion with one another, till, from the whole, we draw the analysis of the actual state of things, and of the progress, or, it may be, the decadence of the cause of truth—of the gospel of truth; and not only can we not attain to this knowledge in our land, but we shall equally fail in our attempt, though we wander all over the earth, if we carry with us our home atmosphere wherever we go. In England, "churchman" and "dissenter," both true believers, are important distinctions; nay, we are so occupied with our petty controversies, and our angry cavilling on words, that we have no eyes for the awful march of infidelity, which now, like an invisible pestilence, may be traced in its results, step by step advancing over the world—we may walk through the cities where it is rampant before us, and not perceive it, if, whilst there, we occupy ourselves solely in investigating into the manner in which our own peculiar form of worship is carried on.

I believe, and with gratitude be it spoken, that, with very rare exceptions, all travellers who quit the shores of England have the cause of Christianity at heart. It must not be said that they injure that cause, for man may not injure a thing divine, but at least they little know how much they paralyse their own power to advance it, by going forth trammelled with their narrow prejudices and their party-spirit. How can we arm ourselves against those who disbelieve the fundamental doctrines, if we ourselves give an undue importance to trifles? We change the deist into a scoffer, if we urge upon him a Church and its discipline, when he does not acknowledge the divine Founder of the one only true and universal Church, even the Church invisible; and we draw down contempt on that which we seek to further, in the eyes of him who hath said in his heart, "There is no God," when we insist on

little frivolous questions in theology, or make it seem as though our religion consisted in the observance of a Sabbath whose institution he denies, as well as the foundation of our hopes to be the distinctive name by which we are called.

It has been my lot to meet not only with infidels and atheists, but with Gnostics and Socinians, and even with followers of the fantastic visionary Swedenburg; and with such men as these we must deal judiciously and cautiously, above all resolving, that they should not see in us—the soldiers of Christ indeed, but warring only with one another! So much might surely be done, so much that is great and glorious, if each one, as he quits the shore of his own enlightened land, would cast aside the petty observances, the words, the names, the shades of opinion, with which, firm in the weightier matters, he may toy and trifle there, and taking up his cross, go forth determined to combat and subdue every slave to that wickedness in which the whole world lieth, with the truth that is in Christ alone and Him crucified. And it is time that holy servants of a holy cause should walk the earth with scrutinising gaze and steady purpose to stem the tide of unbelief that has set in, and as it would seem, shall soon overwhelm it altogether.

Many sanguine travellers, looking at some one narrow portion of the globe alone, and not connecting its religious position with that of other nations, have declared that there is much improvement of late. Protestantism is said, though I think erroneously, to be gaining ground in France; evangelical truth has assuredly found its way into Germany; and in other countries privileges have been granted, and a fair show is made by legislators of the religion which they use as a moral instrument to drive an unsuspecting people to

and fro; but for all this, there is little doubt that they are deceived who take these indications of enlightenment for rays shed by the gospel of truth—rather are they the meteor lights that precede dark storms, soon to settle into deepest night. Let us not, however, with this mournful conviction, sit idly by and see how the spirits that now walk abroad in the noonday are working the ruin of thousands; wherever we may chance to go, scepticism will now stare us in the face; and there let us meet it on its own ground, and boldly, liberally, judiciously, combat it.

The eyes of the present generation in our own land are now open far more, than in the past more lukewarm centuries, to the awful importance of these things—oh! let them not be veiled again by the shadows which the spirit of evil holds out to us instead of the substance, making us alike at home and abroad blind leaders of the blind.

Thoughts such as these may be forgiven me, suggested as they were by the conversation which proceeded with increasing vehemence at my side. Words of blasphemy and impiety sounding over that pure still water, and men looking up to the fair face of heaven to deny their Creator! Beautiful as was the night, I rose up at last and went below, looking forward with much delight to the first view of the queen of cities, which we were to reach early the next morning. We were to arrive, they said, before sunrise; and as the first entrance to the Bosphorus, especially at that hour, is considered so beautiful a sight, we were all determined to be on deck in good time, and greatly tormented the apathetic sailors with repeated injunctions to have us called.

CHAPTER IX.

Great Expectations of the Bosphorus at Sun-rise—The Turkish Empire passing away—Losing its Characteristics—Political Fate ultimately does not effect this Amalgamation—Constantinople remaining unique in one Respect—Past History and present State present the same Contrast—Scenes of Horror in Scenes of Beauty—Dismal View of the Bosphorus—Piercing Cold—Heavy Fog—First Sight of Constantinople—A decided Failure—Landing—Emotion of Madame T——— —View from the Lower Field of Death—Anecdote of the Englishman who would not land—Moral Epicureanism—Walk to the Chapel of the British Embassy—Monsieur de B——'s Conversation—His Investigation into the Progress of Catholicism in the East—Religious Institutions established by France—Establishment of the Sœurs de la Charité—College of the Lazarists—Proselytism—Tolerance of the Government—Anecdote of the Sultan—Hopes for the Result of Propagandanism—Russia at work to undermine it—Jesuits, the covert Instigators.

May 5th.

My friends congratulated me much last night on the great acquisitions my journal was certain to make to-day in an elaborate description of the arrival at Constantinople, and I not less anticipated writing home a long account of how we stood transfixed, with wonder and delight, as the Queen of the East rose out of the sparkling waters before us, like a glorious city, all of gold, so bright did I expect her to seem in the pure flashing light of the rising sun: so much for our waking dreams. I know not if those which haunted the actual sleep of my companions on approaching a city which yields to none on earth, except Jerusalem, in

vast and varied interest, were more like the cold reality. The Turkish Empire itself will soon be a dream—already is it gliding from the scale of nations, losing its distinctive characteristics day by day, and assuming that shadowy indistinctness, as the spirit of other countries steals on it from all sides, which tells that as a peculiar and separate people, it will soon belong only to the past. This fact, daily becoming more glaring to all who even cursorily glance at the actual state of the Ottoman Empire, is noways affected by the political fate, which may ultimately cancel it from among the kingdoms of the earth; a country may change masters, losing even its name, and become merged in one more powerful, whether it be subdued by the force of arms, or handed over to a foreign yoke, by the diplomatic arrangements of those who have made it the toy of their own interest, but it may not the less in this position retain its individuality, if such a term may be used, the character of the people remaining the same, and the spirit of the nation unquenched.

With Turkey, it is very different; it has been the policy alike of all those great powers in whose hands it lies, and whose clashing interests alone have prevented its being long since assigned to one or the other, to undermine it gradually; effacing from it its peculiarities one by one, and bringing it in contact with the moral atmosphere of other countries under the ostensible motive of laudibly introducing civilisation and enlightenment; thus, it will soon matter little whether it holds its place on the map as a Russian province, or by any other name, as far as its own individual existence is concerned. It is the Turkish Empire, with all its great and peculiar features, which is passing away; whose term of existence, leaving a wild and stirring page among the records of the earth, is expiring at last. But even to those of the

passengers whose residence in the East had made them aware of these facts, the night preceding the first sight of Constantinople might well be invaded by visions unknown before.

There is at least one peculiarity, which will cling to it as long as there is one stone left standing on another, and that is the strange affinity which there has ever been, between the fairest and proudest city of which Europe can boast, with constant and ever-recurring images of bloodshed, murder, and cruelty; not even Rome, in the days of the emperors, whose sweetest music was the shrieks of the tortured and the dying, or Paris, weltering in the blood of its revolutionary victims, can be connected in our mind with visions so horrible, of death in a thousand shapes, as this still sanguinary city of beauty. They, it is true, can bring up to the memory periods in their histories of awful and tempestuous darkness, when their streets ran with rivers of blood, and the heart turns faint to think that man can be so demon-like; but it is not, as here, a constant recurrence of ever-varying, never-ending, scenes of horror and infamy, which even now daily rise afresh within old Byzantium's time-honoured walls.

In Rome and Paris, the temporary power given to monsters in human form, or the frenzy of excited passions, firing the populace with passing madness, might convulse them at times with fury; but here the innate and cold-blooded cruelty of the people themselves, as much their fixed and impassible character now as it was centuries ago, has stamped this city with a seal peculiar to itself in the contrast it ever presents of the beautiful and the horrible—death wantoning in as lovely a spot as the world can offer to our eyes—rapine and murder running riot in her fairy gardens—slavery and infamy, that elsewhere creep serpent-like concealed from view, rampant in her golden palaces; and the limpid waters that bathe her feet—the

calm and tranquil waters—hiding within their unhallowed depths a putrifying mass of her innumerable victims.

But little time, however, was given us for dreaming, for the well-tutored sailors had us awoke while it was still almost dark, and we found when we met on deck that in our enthusiastic expectations of witnessing the Bosphorus for the first time at sunrise, many had scarcely slept at all; and now the reality was before us, but never surely was reality so dismally unlike the anticipation. Our first sensation on coming up was of intense cold, aggravated by a piercing wind, which drove a sharp small rain in our faces, as a palpable indication that we were already further to the north than we had been for many years. We looked despondingly round, over a sea of dull gray, and on either side a faint outline of scarce visible hills; a fog somewhat like that in which London is shrouded on a November morning, lay dark and heavy in the air, with its cold damp vapours rising up around us, and making our teeth to chatter audibly, and this was indeed all that was to be seen! Nevertheless, we were unquestionably on the spot where we had expected so different a sight, and we looked at one another in great despair.

At last, in a paroxysm of disappointed enthusiasm, we demanded Constantinople of the captain, as though it was his own private property which he was hiding from us out of spite, and called upon him to give an account of his imposition in passing off this muddy lake upon us as the Bosphorus. He answered that we had not yet altogether entered it; and that as for Constantinople, the great, the beautiful, the day-dream of each one of us, "Eccola!" We looked in the direction indicated, and saw, when the cold wind occasionally raised the curtain of mist, what seemed to us detached portions of a large straggling village; nor could we distinguish the

form of a single building. In short, it was a complete failure. This unfortunate weather had spoilt all, and we could but listen in all humility to the Americans, who now renewed their highly-coloured descriptions of New York and Boston. Our disappointment was so great, that we would hardly admit to ourselves that the scene was rapidly improving, even as we looked on it. A beautiful face, whose charm is in its symmetry and perfection of feature, will still be lovely, even when the gloom of sorrow has chased the smile that brightens it; and so the exquisite landscape, which opened upon us as we passed the "Golden Horn," though sad, without the smile of the sunshine, was stamped with an unequivocal beauty which no mist or cloud could altogether hide.

We had arrived at the landing-place of Tophana, however, and were involved in all the bustle of landing, before the fog had sufficiently cleared away to enable us to enter in detail into the beauties of this marvellous city; and by the time we reached the quay, in the midst of the shipping, we were surrounded by such a motley crowd of vessels of all kinds, that nothing was to be seen through their forests of masts. The noise and confusion were quite distracting; on one side of us, the band of an English man-of-war was playing "God save the Queen" most lustily, and on the other a Turkish vessel, indulging in their favourite amusement of spending powder, was thundering out a volley in honour of some unheard-of *fête;* as usual, both sounds were almost drowned by the clamour of the boatmen along-side, loudly vociferating their respective claims to our patronage; they were principally Greeks, and not nearly so picturesque as those of Smyrna, and as for the *valets-de-place*, they appeared here in hats and coats, and not only speaking French, but with the Parisian accent! Even in the midst of all this

bustle, I was struck with the strong emotion displayed by Madame T——, on finding herself approaching the home of her infancy, where she had dwelt with her father in his days of honour and prosperity, and where all the tragic scenes so deeply impressed on her memory had taken place. We at last effected our landing, and were duly met at the stairs by a detachment from that volunteer corps of half starved ferocious dogs, who invariably receive a stranger on his arrival at Constantinople, and attend on him assiduously during the whole of his stay; they are really dangerous, as one of our party found to his cost, who was severely bitten in the hand by one of them, as he stepped on shore.

The first object which met our eyes was one of those lovely little fountains, which are to be met at the corner of almost every street, forming, each one separately, a perfect little picture, far more admirably arranged, with perhaps a palm-tree, or a cypress waving over them, and a few Turkish women drawing water, than any imaginary grouping could have effected. This one, at first sight, seemed to us merely a fantastic little building of Moresque architecture, decorated with lapis lazuli and gold, and covered with innumerable inscriptions. And now we commenced toiling up the steep, uneven street, which led to the Hôtel de France, thinking all the time how in Paris or London we should have disdained to walk through such rough, ill-paved lanes, and carefully avoiding the contact of the sights and sounds common to all crowded thoroughfares, which met us here at every turn.

Moreover, as we were in Pera, the European quarter, we encountered very few of those brilliant costumes which in Eastern towns make one speedily forget the dust, and the dogs, and the very ungentlemanlike houses from which they generally emerge. But still we were in Constantinople, for

the first time; and various of our party thought it quite necessary to be as much enraptured as is expected on such an occasion: according to the custom of some travellers, who, not being much in the habit of forming a judgment for themselves, will not venture to diverge from the received opinion which often regulates matters of taste, and assiduously admire whatever has been pronounced worthy of admiration by previous tourists—from which, doubtless, it results that so much sameness is to be found in the works of travellers. At last, after half-an-hour of a very steep ascent, we reached "le petit champ des morts," in which our hotel was situated. It is large and handsome, and we were at once conducted into the public sitting-room, a great hall with an immense window at one end.

Now, during our toilsome walk through the streets, we had felt the sun growing hotter and hotter, but in our discontent at the disappointment of the morning, when he had refused to shine, we only looked on this as an aggravation to our trials; and it was not till we approached the window that we discovered how amply he was disposed to compensate for his former sullenness, and what a glorious scene he had prepared to meet our eyes. Looking out of the window is surely the commonest act in the world, but it may have very different results; for, in the one case, you may look out on a dead wall or a red brick house, or the angle of a wet muddy street, whereas here the gorgeous picture that was spread out before us was indeed more a sight to dream of than to tell.

First, directly below us, was the lesser field of death, a very garden, all green grass and wild flowers, blossoming unheeded in careless luxuriance, shaded by lofty trees and tangled brushwood, whose waving branches and dark leaves, clustering around the tombs, broke the sunbeams

into a thousand fragments, and scattered them in glancing light over the marble stones. And these green shades, sloping downwards, opened suddenly, and displayed to view the splendid city that lay beneath, one glittering mass of oriental buildings, all confused, though bright, because each golden dome and polished ball caught the strong sun-light, and dazzled the eye that vainly sought to penetrate this wilderness of varied and fantastic architecture: except indeed where, abrupt and distinct, the tapering minarets shot up against the pure blue sky, or a dark group of cypress trees made some great mosque stand out in strong relief, till every line of its old Byzantine walls was visible. There lay St. Sophia, which the imagination does so people with mighty phantoms that the first sight of it brings with it a feeling as though we gazed upon a thing unearthly; and near it the matchless seraglio, rising all sparkling out of a bed of the richest foliage, where the lights and shadows chased each other till they expired among the more sombre trees; and, beyond that, again those light and fairy palaces, with their lovely bowers so green and fresh, because they sweep down to the very edge of the water, and are kissed by every faintly rippling wave that rises on the scarce-heaving bosom of the Bosphorus;—again that Bosphorus itself, pure and smiling, carrying the eye in one unbroken line to the fair gardens of Asia on the other side, to which the distance gives a dream-like beauty.

I am certain that not one of all who stood in silent wonder, gazing on this scene, will ever forget it; those amongst us who had declared that Venice and Naples might at least be called rivals to what has been termed an unrivalled city, now willingly gave up their former favourites; and very marvellous did it seem to us that this

magic scene should present, when viewed in detail, an aspect, so mean, and pitiful, and often revolting, as we had already ascertained in our walk. I am somewhat inclined to agree with a recent English traveller, who, having been more favoured with the weather on his arrival here than we were, saw the full beauty of this view burst upon him at once, and instantly declared that as nothing could possibly enhance the charm, any nearer inspection must necessarily detract from it, and therefore positively refused to land at all, and returned home without having set his foot on the shore!

There is a moral epicureanism in thus seeking to retain the image of beauty once stamped on the mind, without allowing any less bright to efface it, impossible to be carried out in this ever-shifting life; in like manner the traveller, as he passes from land to land, would fain give a record only of the bright and beautiful, and describe no scenes but those which bring pleasing pictures before the eye;—but this must not be;—if he is a follower of truth, he must tell how in the external landscape he passed from the bright mountain top to the dark valley, and how the clouds ever chased the sunbeams over the face of the earth; and in the living world how often he found that evil was glossed over with the semblance of good, that social systems which seemed so fair and smooth, were rotten at the core, and how, unsuspected by the wise and true, injustice and infamy were often systematically carried on around them; he must draw the veil from all that sins against the cause we serve, and if he would that man should profit by his wanderings, he must not dally with the ills which even now creep disguised among the nations, and whose foul influence, extending far beyond the term of his own short life, may carry their poison to the heart of a yet unborn people.

We were drawn from our contemplation of the view

by the arrival of Monsieur de S——'s two friends—Monsieur de B——, and his nephew, Monsieur Ernest, who had preceded him, and on whom we were disposed to look with some anxiety, as they were to be our companions on the Danube all the way to Vienna, a period of seventeen days, half of which we would spend with them in quarantine. Happily there is a sort of family likeness between well-born, gentlemanlike men, of whatever country they may be, which ensured their being very pleasant companions. We had not forgotten that it was Sunday, a day which it is perhaps more important to keep rigidly abroad than at home, in order that there may not seem to be any inconsistency in our conduct to those who have witnessed the strictness of its observance in England.

We set out to go to church; but as we had an hour to spend before the service began, we employed it in walking about the town. It was a strange thing that walk through Constantinople, rambling on without any definite object; now passing along streets where the strange-looking houses almost closed over our heads, and where negro slaves, running to and fro, made way for the Turkish seignors riding along on prancing horses splendidly caparisoned; or coming suddenly on a little open "plâce" half-filled with the picturesque sellers of water, and their picturesque customers; or turning down to a cemetery, where the Turkish women sat shrouded in their white veils, and the merry children played with the bones and skulls; and ever and anon, as we rounded the corner of a street, or passed an opening among the cypress trees, the same gorgeous view we had seen from the window flashed upon us again, and once more the glittering city was revealed, with the beaming waters at its feet, and the fair gardens of Asia shadowy and soft beyond. On entering within the court of the neat and quiet little chapel

belonging to the British embassy, I could almost have fancied myself in some parish church in England, so familiar seemed the porch and latticed window, with the roses growing over them; but the dark faces of some Arabs, who thrust themselves in after us, dispelled the illusion.

On returning to the hotel for dinner, it was quite a pleasure to meet with all our companions again, most of whom had taken rooms here. Madame T—— had left us for the house of a friend, but she is to join us in all our expeditions, and so are the Americans, of whom the only representative now present is a person known amongst ourselves by the name of Kentucky, from the constant repetition of the word in his conversation. He is also going up the Danube, and seems to think himself less likely to lose his way if he keeps us in sight.

We were much interested in the information given to us by Monsieur de B—— on the institutions which have been established in this city by the French Sœurs de la Charité. It seems that he came here partly to investigate into their proceedings, and the account he gave of all he had heard and seen was well worthy of attention. He told us that in 1839 two pious women, who had become converts to the Roman Catholic religion, had come to Constantinople, and devoted themselves to the work of instructing and otherwise benefiting the moslem poor. Their efforts were crowned with so much and such rapid success, that the establishment in the same place of a large body of the Sœurs de la Charité, who came from France for the purpose, was the speedy result. Short as the time has been since these zealous Christians have entered upon this new field of labour, it must be owned in all justice that the progress they have made, and the beneficial effects of their judicious efforts, are most surprising. Before the year

1840, no means of instruction whatever existed for young girls at Galata. The sisterhood of St. Vincent de Paul, in that quarter, now clothe, board, and educate four hundred entirely of the poorer classes, and of all religions indiscriminately. The order of the "Frères de la Doctrine Chretienne," have a similar establishment for boys; and at Bebec, on the Bosphorus, the brotherhood of the Lazarists have formed a college for young men of the higher ranks, who to the number of eighty, are there receiving an education organised on the system practised in the university of France.

In none of these institutions, all of which are admirably conducted, is there the smallest attempt made to proselytise; their proceedings are as politic as they are generous and active, for they well know how very difficult such a task would be. The mere natural indolence of the Turks would make them eschew such a revolution in their lives as a change of creed must produce —how much more when invited, in addition, to adopt a religion which would prohibit their harems, and abolish slavery! They go no further, therefore, than to endeavour to inculcate the principles of a general morality, and to inspire a reverence for their own faith, solely from the fruits it bears in themselves. The holy sisters, in distributing their abundant charities and kind offices to all who are in want, of whatever creed or denomination they may be, merely say "we do it for the love of God;" and the admiration as well as confidence with which both they and the Lazarists have inspired the Turks is unbounded. Even government, as it would appear, not only tolerates but approves of these institutions, if we are to judge by an anecdote which Monsieur de B—— related to us.

A Turk, who occupied a position sufficiently important to render his proceedings a matter of comment and curi-

osity, had placed his son at the College of Bebec; but "Le Monde Turc," as Monsieur de B—— said, and more especially the Oulemahs, were so loud in their disapprobation of this act, that he speedily withdrew him from it again. The affair became known to the present sultan, Abdul Mejid. He instantly desired that father and son should appear before him, and interrogated the young man as to whether any attempt had been made, directly or indirectly, to convert him. The youth answered, "Never." Upon which the sultan ordered him instantly to return to the College, and expressed himself in flattering terms respecting the brotherhood.

From the favourable reception which these servants of the Roman Church have met with in the land of the Osmanli, Monsieur de B—— indulges in far brighter visions of all that they may yet accomplish, than I am disposed even to admit as possible. It is his earnest desire that all the scattered efforts of his country at Propagandanism should be united in one strong, well-directed movement towards the East; and his enthusiastic patriotism, rendering him very sanguine for any attempt made by La Belle France, carries him on to look for a most improbable success: not even stopping short of the hope that in a century or two some new Constantine may arise to plant the universal banner of the cross in the Oriental world. We might have joined the Frenchman in his wishes, notwithstanding the exclusion from the great work he projected of all nations but his own, were it but from the natural desire to see Christianity enter into this country under any form whatsoever; but we certainly could not share in his hopes.

Independently of what I deem the moral impossibility of ever inducing the Turks to abandon the creed which so plea-

santly pampers their evil propensities, there are a thousand counteracting influences ever in full play. Russia is even now at work, both here and in Persia, to arrest the progress of Catholicism; and we must remember that, though the motives of the individuals engaged in the work of Propagandanism may be a sincere desire to spread their religion, as in the case of this holy sisterhood it certainly is—where those efforts are directed by governments, it is policy, and not the glory of God, which is the spring of action,—indeed, I could not help thinking that the Jesuits, toiling on so marvellously and so indefatigably to universal dominion, and for whom Catholicism is at once a cloak and an instrument, might well be the covert instigators of all these holy efforts in the East.

' If it were so, however, Monsieur de B—— was utterly unaware of it, for his dislike to this powerful body was, I think, only equalled by his dread of them. Nor must we allow him, uncontradicted, to assert that the cause of Christianity in Turkey is abandoned to France alone,—the American missionaries, less numerous, less rich perhaps, but actuated in singleness of heart by the sole desire of advancing their heavenly Master's kingdom, and who have nothing to do with policy and expediency, have already worked their way much farther than we could have looked for.

When dinner was over, we seated ourselves on the long divan, placed below the window. The curtains which hung over them during the heat of the day were drawn up, and the same matchless spectacle was offered to our gaze, now more than ever like an unreal vision; for the soft shadows of evening, which could not darken it, from the purity of the atmosphere, had tempered all to an ideal beauty. And as we reclined there, the mind involun-

tarily retraced the eventful history of that great Eastern empire, swept away in the wreck of departed ages by the inviolate law which makes all things that have existence in the world to hurry to their own destruction, and that destruction again to breed new life, so that the face of this earth is like a billowy ocean, where one by one the nations rise and fall, and gather up their strength and overwhelm each other, and then disperse and sink and rise again!

And so we lay, gazing down upon this monument of earth's ephemeral glory, and nature's imperishable loveliness, whilst in the street below, the tinkling bells of the Arabas, gay with their silken hangings, and laden with the veiled sultanas, mingled with the cries of the slaves to the oxen that drew them, and the confused sound of strange Oriental tongues, came vaguely on the ear, and then, as the last flashing ray of sunset expired on the bright water, there suddenly arose upon the still night air the low musical call to prayers. In one single instant the cry was taken up from minaret to minaret, and mosque to mosque, with its wild, peculiar intonation, now sounding near and startling, now floating away over the far waves, and now so faint and distant that we could not tell whether it came from Europe or from Asia,—and in the midst of all this there came an Italian boy, with the hand-organ, under the window, and played the last new polka. The interruption was perhaps so far advantageous, that nothing else could have induced us to go to bed, on this our first night at Constantinople.

CHAPTER X.

Assembly of the Party for a Day of Sight Seeing—Habitués of the Hotel—Perfide Albion—The Guide—The East in full Perfection—The Seraglio—Oriental Magnificence nowhere to be found—Soi-disant Galleries of Pictures—Portrait of Grace Darling—Reminiscences of Death and Bloodshed—The Mosques—The Great Cherubim Mahomedanism—Its daily Influence on those around us—Its various Effects on various Nations—The At'Mahden—Death of the Political Agent of Sultan Mahmoud—His Tomb—Madame T.—Her Hatred even for the Corpse—Nurseries of Dead Children—Murder of the Sultan's Nephews and Nieces—The City of Shops—The Slave-market—The rejected Slave—The Sisters—The Infirm—The Dervishes—Their Monasteries—Their Graves—The Exhibition—Their Extraordinary Proceedings—Their own Idea of their Mummeries—Their Cupidity—The Young Fanatic.

May 6th.

THE firman requisite before the mosques can be visited, had been obtained for Monsieur de S———, before his arrival, and as he kindly wished us to avail ourselves of it, this day was to be entirely devoted to seeing all those sights, which, although new in their palpable reality to each separate visitor, have been so often described, that the details are now often tiresome. In this hotel, which is extremely comfortable, the meals are taken in common in the public sitting-room, and we find this a great advantage, as it affords us an opportunity of gaining much information from the various habitués of the place; amongst these is the editor of a Turkish newspaper, and one or two Frenchmen, naturalised in the country for

many years. Madame T——— and her brother arrived in good time to accompany us, and Monsieur de S—— acceded to a written request from two or three Englishmen to be allowed to do the same; when we went down to the door, however, there was a universal exclamation of "perfide Albion!" for the two or three had augmented to a party of some twenty or thirty, and it was by no means agreeable to be followed by such a crowd.

All travellers must know well, of what importance it is, in such a place as Constantinople, to procure an intelligent guide; a man who will not only bring new objects before the eyes, but also shed new lights upon the mind. We had been fortunate in engaging a Frenchman, of the name of Joseph, quite capable of instructing us on many points.

We crossed, in those very graceful and very uncomfortable caïques, to that part of the city more properly termed Constantinople. I was struck with the vast difference between this quarter and that of the Franks at Pera, which has lost so much of its Orientalism, without having acquired any European comfort. Here we had the East again in full perfection, with all the strong contrast which it ever presents—its magnificence and its want of cleanliness, its solemn majestic-looking people, with their trifling aimless occupations; in short, its refinement of luxury, and, if such a term may be used, its refinement of barbarism. Our first visit was to the Seraglio, the exterior of which is so charming at once from its extreme architectural elegance, and from the rich luxuriant gardens that rise all around it; yet, according to the invariable law of disenchantment, on walking through those gardens, they are no more beautiful than those which are to be found on every gentleman's estate in England; and with the interior I was grievously disappointed, as far as the furniture

went at least. The long suites of rooms are certainly very handsome, and often magnificent, but instead of the gorgeous draperies, and cushions, and divans, which I had expected, they were furnished with miserable chairs and tables, looking as civilised as possible; the baths, however, were really splendid, particularly those commonly used by the late sultan, and I thought how often he must have reposed there, after the fatigues of witnessing an execution in the court below — that kingly pastime of this lovely land. The so-called gallery of pictures was most particularly amusing, as it consisted of a long narrow corridor, with windows on one side, and on the other an interminable range of wretched engravings, all of precisely the same size, in precisely the same gilt frame, and as close to one another as they could be placed. We found the portrait of Grace Darling amongst them, a strange illustration of the power of one heroic act.

Truly, it was a bright and pleasant palace, and the marble halls were very cool, with the murmur of the fountains sounding through them; and sweet, too, the scented air that was wafted in from the sunny gardens beyond; and yet there was an atmosphere of death hanging round it, and the bewildered eyes often fancied they saw stains of blood on the rich carpets or snow white pavements. There is one little opening in the women's apartments directly on the Bosphorus, where we even fancied still there lingered the echo of many more and wilder shrieks, than ever haunted even the bridge of Sighs at Venice.

The Turks would seem to hold the abode of their monarch as sacred as their places of worship, since we had equally to change our shoes for slippers on entering within it. Leaving the Seraglio gardens, we crossed through various courts towards a stately and a mighty

building, whose name, bearing the weight of centuries, conjures up a crowd of images that oppress the mind. We entered by a low door, and so passed from the bright sunlight and the waving trees into the deep gloom of the vast and solemn St. Sophia. All within its immense and sounding depths, from its wide domes lined with golden mosaic, to its time-worn pavement covered with carpets of inestimable value, was redolent of the past, and of a past bearing on the destinies of many nations. But most it struck upon the heart, to see how every here and there the half-effaced cross was replaced by the well-defined crescent. The immense cherubim, whose mysterious-looking image had been stamped on the roof by the Christian founder, have been left untouched, probably because the Turks knew not what they were; and to me there is almost an awful feeling in looking up to them now, for they seem like stern witnesses, unwittingly retained by the very desecrators themselves, to behold the abominations now profaning that once holy building.

The treasures accumulated within this edifice must be immense, as we could judge by the piles of large cases which contain all the property of those who have no other place of security. Here they will leave their jewels and money even open, as they know the building to be held so sacred that none would dare to touch them. From the gallery which runs along the wall at a considerable distance from the ground, the view of the interior of St. Sophia is really quite unequalled.

From thence we proceeded to visit six or seven other mosques; that of Achmet remarkable for its antiquity, and of Soliman for the exquisite freshness and elegancy of its decorations; but having seen one we had in fact seen all, they are so perfectly similar the one to the other, always the same in form and arrangement,

only here and there the arabesques differing a little or the colour of the draperies ; I could even have thought it was the very same Moslems, who, each time we entered, cast on us looks of such bitter contempt, and drew aside their garments that we might not contaminate them by our touch. I know not why it is that those buildings, unquestionably places of worship, quiet and solemn, and whose sacredness is so much enforced, should yet fail to inspire the visitor with any of those subdued, sober feelings, which the mere entrance into a fine Latin church, or one of our own cathedrals, or even a quiet little parish church, invariably produces. It were but a fancy to suppose that the spirit of the true religion, whose observances are there carried on, has, as it were, purified the very air within them, and that the ever-rising incense of sincere and humble prayer so lingers in the atmosphere, that by its unseen influence we feel ourselves to be in holy ground; but this at least may well be, that our knowledge of what that creed is, for whose support those gorgeous mosques were raised, will cast a far deeper gloom over our own minds on entering them, than that with which all the most solemn shades of their vaulted chambers could ever inspire us.

Mahomedanism is hourly opening out into a new aspect before me. I had imagined it but a low, degraded creed, one of the numerous offsprings of prolific error and ignorance, which, as a substitute for the truth that has not yet dawned upon them, could not have a better or a worse effect in its moral influence, on the great multitude, than any other vain superstition; but from the conversation of those whom I meet here, and who are well qualified to judge, and from a closer view of its palpable working, not as seen in the history of past ages, but on the hearts and minds of the individuals with whom I am actually in contact every day, I cannot but

think, that it was originally a deeply-laid scheme, carried out with an almost fiend-like knowledge of the human heart, for enthralling the people by working solely on their evil passions. Most other religions, however much they may have fallen from their common origin in man's instinctive consciousness of the Supreme, have at least for their ultimate aim and end the moral improvement of man; whereas the system of Islamism would seem in every doctrine and in every law to foster and bring forth their worst propensities, presenting even the heaven for which their purer spirit is to strive under images so earthly, that the very hope itself degrades them to the lowest level of mankind; and satisfying the conscience that goads their fallen nature to arise, with a few material and unmeaning observances, strong only in their strictness.

It is thus at least that Mahomedanism appears in this country; elsewhere it may be, and I have heard that it is, otherwise; a religion not divine must necessarily have different results according to the character and peculiarities of the people on whom it acts, like the practical working of any other system. Assuredly it has found here a fair field, if its object were to brutalise the people and paralyse their higher faculties; for I become daily more convinced that in none have the last traces of that image in which man was created been more utterly effaced than in the Turks, notwithstanding the strong prepossession in favour of this people which exists in Europe, and which I fully shared till I found myself face to face with them in their own country, and in their true colours.

We now passed through the court of the At' Mahdan, where again, as at every step in this strange place, the eye is feasted with scenes of beauty, while the mind reverts to scenes of horror. The fine old mosque of Achmet fills

one side; the Egyptian obelisk, and the pseudo serpent, supposed, without any foundation for the idea, to be a mysterious relic of the now desolate Delphi, rise in the centre; and there are sparkling fountains and towering trees: but this white pavement was once a very sea of blood, and the walls of the old Achmet mosque have echoed to the shrieks of the dying, for this is the scene of the massacre of the janissaries, and opposite is the blackened ruin of their barrack, whither they were driven in their desperate resistance, that those in whom life was obstinate might be exterminated by fire.

Sultan Mahmoud had ably made death his political agent in this instance; but we passed on to verify how speedily that awful power had claimed as his slave the master of thousands in slavery, for our next visit was to the tomb of that monarch. A flight of marble steps leads up into a large circular room, where the bright sunshine is streaming in through the great windows, softened only by passing through the blooming flowers that are twined around them; there is a luxurious carpet, and the richest hangings and low seats, with silken cushions—every thing that should lead us to suppose this the bower of some young pampered beauty; but in the centre stands a wooden sarcophagus, over which hang the heavy folds of the most splendid carpets and cashmere shawls, and within lies the now powerless body of the crafty sultan, rotting and decaying, not the less that he has sought to draw luxury down with him, even to the grave.

His predecessors have all similar places of repose, which we also visited; and on entering this one, Madame T—— earnestly asked to which of the monarchs it belonged; when she heard the name, too well known to her, she uttered a piercing shriek, and fixing her great black eyes on the tomb

with the most impassioned hate, exclaimed: "It is the murderer of my father, I detest even his dead corpse!" Her emotion was so great, that she was forced to leave us, and we did not see her again that day.

If any thing connected with death could ever be ludicrous, the rooms containing the innumerable little dead sultans and sultanas, would certainly be so; strange nurseries, all filled with rows of wooden boxes, where a tiny turban or a veil indicates the sex. I know not if in former times the sultan's nephews and nieces had a better fate than in the present day; it is said to be a systematic part of the reigning monarch's policy to have all the children who are born to his brothers and sisters, strangled a few hours after their birth, in order that there may not be too many heirs in the direct line of succession to the throne.

The necessity of visiting all these objects of interest at once, one only firman being granted for them all, renders this course of sight-seeing most fatiguing; a succession of pictures for the eye and mind at once, which it would take a month to appreciate in detail, are brought before us one after another in the course of a few hours. We felt at the close of this day as we used to do on New Year's night long ago, that we had had a great deal too much of every thing that is delightful, and were quite wearied with being happy; this is the stirring kind of life which makes a man feel he is living too rapidly, and must die awhile in calm oblivious sleep, ere his straining mind wake again to think and reason, and wonder; and so the Kef on the divan by the open window was more than usually pleasant, when evening came stealing over us with its balmy odours, and its own peculiar soft repose.

May 7th.

This morning we felt very listless and exhausted, very

much disposed to lean for hours together at the open window, and single out some one little caïque, from the myriads that are shooting to and fro on the calm waters below, and watch its course, till it vanishes in the shade of some garden reflected there; but at nine o'clock Joseph stands at the door, cap in hand; at half-past nine he speaks. Monsieur must surely have finished his narghilé. Mademoiselle had better fetch her bonnet. We tell him it is very hot; he answers, that we are going to the bazaars, which are covered in, so that we shall not feel the sun; and so, indeed, we found, when, having accomplished his purpose, as a determined man may always do, by the mere power of his own strong will acting on the minds of others —the triumphant guide led us through the city of shops.

Street after street did we traverse through the interior of vast old buildings, which must originally have been constructed for some very different purpose, each displaying its own peculiar merchandise, and amply filled with a motley crowd, at once striking, fantastic, and varied; but all silent, carrying on their traffic in pantomime. We saw the stalls of jewels, and of rich stuffs, and splendid armour, and then they took us on to the market of human life. Joseph led the way, and we were not long in reaching the slave-market. It was a long low building, forming a square of considerable size. We mounted a few unsteady, dirty steps, and found ourselves on a large wooden platform, running the whole length of the building. It was divided into pens, shut in by wooden railings, in which were confined the black slaves; whilst through the open doors leading into the house itself, we could distinguish the veiled forms of the white

* The slave-market was abolished on the 30th of January of the present year.

women grouped behind the wooden screens. On benches so placed as to command a view of both, were seated the buyers, for the most part heavy, ill-looking Turks, dressed in the hideous costume introduced by the late sultan, and occupied, as usual, in smoking, though the quick glance of their calm, piercing eyes seemed to take in every thing in complete detail. The seller stood before them, vociferating and gesticulating in the true Oriental manner. The court below, which we were to visit afterwards, was filled with all the less valuable part of this human merchandise; consisting of those afflicted with any infirmity, very aged persons, and young children. It was some time before we comprehended the scene in all its details: it is not to be wondered at that we were stupified in witnessing such a sight on European ground.

At length we approached one of the pens, determined to examine, to the fullest extent, into all that was revolting and horrible in this market of human life. It was filled with young Circassian women, some of whom were remarkably handsome. They were seated close together on the ground, seemingly in an attitude of listless despondency, with their long white garments flowing round them. As we came up, they fixed their large dark eyes upon us, and I certainly never met a gaze of more unutterable sadness. The conviction thrilled through me, as my eyes met theirs, that these unfortunate beings are not, as modern philanthropists would have us believe, utterly unconscious of and incapable of feeling the dishonour and wretchedness of their fate. I felt, as I stood before them and encountered their soft, melancholy glance, that they looked on me as the free and happy stranger, come to gaze on them in their infamy and their misery.

Presently, the slave-trader, to whom the poor creatures belonged, came up, followed by a tall phlegmatic-looking

Turk, with the unmeaning features and coarse corpulency which are so characteristic of his nation. The merchant advanced, and seizing one of the slaves by the arm, forced her to stand up before this personage, who, it appeared, wished to buy her. He looked at her for a few minutes from head to foot, whilst her master descanted on her merits; then he placed one hand on the back of her neck, whilst he jerked her head rudely with the other, so as to force her to open her mouth, that he might examine her teeth; he roughly handled her neck and arms, to ascertain if the flesh were firm; and, in short, the examination was such, that I do not hesitate to declare I have seen a horse or a dog more tenderly treated under similar circumstances. After all, the decision was unfavourable, for the Turk turned away with a contemptuous movement of the head, and the slave-dealer, in a rage, thrust back the unfortunate creature, who sank down trembling amongst her companions in misery.

Neither my friend nor I had uttered a word during this scene; we stood silent side by side, and mechanically followed our guide, who led us into the adjoining enclosure. Here we became witness to a sale that was just about to be completed. A most interesting group presented itself before us: two young female slaves, both with most pleasing countenances, stood together closely embraced, the arm of the one round the neck of the other; their attitude, as well as the strong likeness between them, pointing them out at once as sisters. On their side was an African slave-dealer, in whose ferocious countenance it seemed impossible to discern a trace of human feeling. He was armed with a large heavy stick, with which he drove them to and fro, literally like a herd of animals. Three or four Turks were discussing, with considerable animation, the price of one of the women; but the bargain

had been struck just before we came in, and one of the party, a stout, good-looking man, was paying down the money. When this was completed, with an imperious movement of the hand, he motioned to his newly-purchased slave to follow him. It was the youngest and the most timid of the two sisters whom he had selected. Nothing could have been more painful than to watch the intense, the terrified anxiety, with which both had followed the progress of sale; and now it was concluded, and they knew that the moment of separation was arrived, she whose fate had been sealed, disengaged herself, and, turning round, placed her two hands on her sister's shoulders, with a firm grasp, and gazed into her eyes. Not words, not tears, could have expressed one-half of the mute, unutterable despair that dwelt in that long, heart-rending gaze. It were hard to say which face was most eloquent of misery: but the Turk was impatient; he clapped his hands together. This was a well-known signal. A slight tremour shook the frame of the young slave; her arms fell powerless at her side, and she turned to follow her master. The voiceless but agonised farewell was over. In another moment, we could just distinguish her slender figure threading its way through the crowd, in company with the other slaves belonging to the Turk. Her sister had hid herself behind her companions, and now sat on the ground, her head sunk upon her folded arms.

Our guide would have led us into another pen; but we had seen enough, we hurried through the various groups till we reached the open court. The sight which presented itself here was even more revolting than what we had already seen. Huddled together on dirty mats, and exposed to the full power of the burning noon-day sun, lay a number of miserable-looking beings—blind,

lame, and deformed; some crawling about on crutches, others unable to use their distorted limbs, and, in short, afflicted with every imaginable infirmity. Nothing can be conceived more wretched than their fate. They are considered as almost quite worthless by their masters, and are starved and beaten in proportion as their misfortunes render them unprofitable. This lasts till they are bought in lots, for a mere trifle, by some one who takes them as a sort of speculation, trusting that amongst several one or two may be found of use; the treatment of the remainder may be imagined. We distributed a few paras amongst them, which they begged from us, in tones of the most piteous entreaty; and then left the slave-market, carrying away with us a very different impression of the actual evils of this vile system, than we had before conceived.

We required something to enliven us, after witnessing so mournful a scene, and certainly nothing could be more perfectly calculated to do so than the visit we now paid to the dancing dervishes.[1] I had heard of this strange spectacle often, but I could never have imagined a sight at once so painful and so ludicrous,—most painful, because those poor fanatics call this a religion; and there is no point of view in which humanity seems so utterly fallen, as when the creature degrades himself, thinking thereby to do the Creator service—and ludicrous in its details beyond description. Although Mahomedans, the precise doctrines and tenets of this sect, as well as their origin, are not known. They dwell for the most part in monasteries, much on the same system as in Roman Catholic countries.

The building to which we were now introduced was large and handsome, surrounded by a cemetery, so full of flowers, that each grave was literally a bed of

roses. The exhibition room, for so it may reasonably be called, from the crowd of spectators, was arranged exactly like a circus, with a gallery for the visitors. Within the ring, some thirty or forty dervishes crouched on the ground, muffled in great yellow mantles, and with their sugar-loaf caps drawn over their faces. An old gentleman in a green cloak, evidently intended to be a very potent dignitary, sat on a cushion at the top of the room, the very personification of sublime stupidity.

Presently, without any warning, we were startled by all the dervishes falling suddenly on their faces on the ground; then they rose, and threw off their mantles, appearing only in a full white petticoat and jacket to match; next taking a firm grasp of their own shoulders, they commenced marching slowly round, and when they arrived opposite the old gentleman in the green cloak, they performed a most extraordinary salutation, keeping their bodies bent long after they were past him; the respect, however, seemed due to his place quite as much as to himself, for after they had gone round once, he rose, and began to walk to and fro in the most tragic and solemn manner, seemingly without any definite object, and then they passed round again twice, and bowed just as low to his cushion, which I thought rather an apt illustration of the homage generally paid to a man in public office. And now the most extraordinary music I ever heard struck up; I cannot even guess what the instruments were of which it was composed; there was a drum, and a fife, and a Jew's-harp, I am sure; but anyhow, it excited the dervishes, who all began to dance, whirling round with the most inconceivable rapidity. I was curious to discover, from the countenances of these men, what was the view they took themselves of this wretched mummery, and

whether they were actuated in their observance of it, by fanaticism, or cupidity, or blind superstition. However much the face of a man be a mask to his thoughts, when he wills that it should be so, as these impassible dervishes evidently did, the light from the soul will, in spite of himself, flash across it at times, and reveal them. I thought I could perceive, even in the fixed eyes of those men, which they pertinaciously neither turned to the right nor to the left, a look of cunning and crafty satisfaction, which gave me at once the impression that it is very much to their own interest to practise this marvellous kind of sanctity, and that all this waltzing is, somehow or other, a very good speculation.

There were a few, however, who were evidently sincere. They are supposed to be in a state of beatitude whilst spinning round at this rate; and there was one young man who, with extended arms, and closed eyes, preserved an expression of the most ecstatic joy, even while his face grew livid from the rapid motion. The ceremony was over when the dervishes had all pretended to give one another a fraternal embrace, though in reality they only looked sentimentally over each other's shoulders. We came out into the fresh air, thoroughly giddy and bewildered, morally and physically, after having looked for an hour or more on these whirling figures, and remembered that these were men, with the gift of reason, and that they called this worship!—worship of Him, at least as gloriously revealed to them as to the common family of man, in nature, if they will not see him in a yet more glorious revelation.

CHAPTER XI.

A Dream like Reality, but not really a Dream—Sail down the Bosphorus—Singing Birds in the Woods and in the Palace—Les Ames damnées—The Message from the Black Sea—The Country Khan—The Woods—The Swarm of Serpents—The secret Horrors of the Bosphorus—Story of the murdered Patriarch—The Seraskier's Tower—The Galley Slaves—Dangerous Adventure in the Burial Place—The Cisterns—Disastrous Fate of the adventurous Englishman—A Turko-Frenchman—His Views—Scutari—The Empire of the Dead—Anecdote of the Frank who was bastinadoed—The Sultan's Revenge on a Greek Cobbler—His Highness's Sister—Her Wedding—Her Intellectual Amusements.

May 8th.

THERE are some among the shifting scenes of that landscape, now in light, now in darkness, through which the current of our existence flows, when we have looked upon some spot we never see again, or listened to voices that are heard no more, which, when gone, and lost for ever, seem to us so like a dream, a thing that never could have really been, that it very soon, in actual reality, holds the same place in our memory as the false and beautiful vision of some deep sleep; and such a dream this day will assuredly be for me, spent as it was in sailing down the whole length of the Bosphorus to Bayukdere. Even now that it is so recent, I scarce can define or classify the varied and still lovely pictures that one by one were offered to our eyes: passing so rapidly and seen no more,

they have left but a vague impression on my mind, of nature more beautiful than I had ever before beheld it. It was so bright and sunny a morning as we lay down on the carpets of that little light caïque, and floated away over the clear, still bosom of the Bosphorus; so clear, so still, that when we gazed upon it, the eye plunged into the unfathomable depths of the cloudless heaven which it reflected; and a little further on, still looking down into the waters, there appeared within them the shadow of a landscape so very fair, that we turned eagerly to earth to seek for the reality, and saw that it was the long undulating hills of the Asiatic shore, with its cypress groves and its bright green fields. There was another fair reality yet nearer to us, and as we glided along, beneath the shade of the European gardens, we could not but own that man, for once, had tampered with nature, and had not profaned it altogether; for the eye could pass with pleasure from the green banks, clothed only in most luxuriant vegetation, to the graceful edifices reared by the human hand.

The monarch's summer palace, called the Marble Cradle, with its terraces and brazen gates, opening on the water, is like the dream of some architect realised by fairy hands ere he awakes; and every turn reveals some fantastic dwelling, each more charming than the other, which these children of luxury have fashioned for themselves. And as we floated on in the calm sunshine, so intensely calm that every leaf and blossom hung motionless in the light, we could distinctly hear the singing birds in the green woods above us; and as we passed the palaces, a sweeter music sometimes came to us from the sadder birds imprisoned there within, the joyous sound of gay young voices, telling, albeit in intellectual darkness and degraded, these slaves to ignorance and man had yet retained that blessed

perception of the beautiful given to every living creature, which constrained them in their prison to make merry with hours so sunny as these. There were always hovering round us too, those strange birds called "les âmes damnées," because they are never known to stay one moment the fluttering of their snow-white wings, and are supposed to be souls of the lost, whose curse it is that they cannot rest, but ever wearily pass and repass over the waters that repulse them from their breast when they would seek repose.

In the midst of all this stillness and brightness there was a sudden change. We had glided on some eight or ten miles, when there suddenly came a rushing breeze, sweeping down from the Black Sea, as though it came on an urgent message. In an instant it had covered the shining lake with a sheet of foam, and the great white clouds, with which its wings were laden, dashed a heavy shower of warm rain in our faces; yet, though the blast was violent, and the rain fell fast, it was not like the gloomy storms of other climes, but seemed as though, when most we revelled in the quiet beauty round us, the wind had lifted up a warning voice, and the sky had shed a few bright tears, to remind us that the sunshine and the summer brightness would not last for ever, but that night and winter both would come; and even if they could last, and had not within them, as all bright things of earth, the essence of decay, yet we must pass from them, and change these smiling scenes for chillier lands, and all this dreamy idleness for the daily toil and cold routine of duty, which each one is called on to perform.

Soon the rushing breeze passed on and carried the great clouds with it, and then from beneath their shadows the sunbeams glided forth again, and stole over chafing waters, bidding them lie down and rest: and so

they rested, as many a troubled soul has likewise done, when a holy light has stolen over it. During the rapid storm we were forced to put in, as the boatmen feared the caïque might be swamped, and we took refuge in a café at some little distance from the shore, which was filled with the traders from the Asiatic coast. They had assuredly never seen European strangers before; and great was their astonishment at the strange dress of the gentlemen, and at my unveiled head. They treated us with great natural politeness, and conversed in Arabic with Monsieur de S———, asking many strange questions. When all was still again we resumed our course, and soon reached Buyukdere, not far from the entrance to the Black Sea, to which Europe and Asia, drawing near to one another, form so complete a gateway. The village of Buyukdere is less beautiful than I expected, but the wooded hills rising up behind it are lovely. Two of the gentlemen began to stroll along one of the green paths that led up from the shore, and in stooping to gather a few of the wild flowers that grew in rich profusion on all sides, found that they were surrounded by an inconceivable number of snakes, and serpents of all kinds, that twined themselves round their feet till they actually fled in horror.

The return to Pera, against the current the whole way, had not the same charm which the brightness and intense repose of noon had given to the morning sail. To those who are somewhat acquainted with the details of the history of the Ottoman empire, the sail over the Bosphorus must produce many mingled and strange reflections; for, could they speak, those beautiful, serene, and voiceless waters, how many an awful tale of blood and infamy they would reveal! Could they but open and display to the stoical gaze of the tra-

vellers who glide in such delicious ease over their glassy bosom, the putrifying mass which loads their hidden depths, formed by the mangled bodies of those innumerable victims! It seemed to me as the light caïque, that bore me, shot over the scarce rippling waves, that I beheld the venerable form of the good old patriarch (who, twenty years before, was flung there, warm and bleeding, from the hands of his executioners) floating by, with his white hair dabbled in blood, and his hands still uplifted, in the last vain prayer for mercy. I know not if this appalling history is generally known, but the blood of that holy old man alone would suffice to leave an indelible stain on the Turkish nation.

It was at the period of the first outbreak of the war of independence, whereby Greece attained her nominal liberty, the news had reached Constantinople of the revolt of some of the more distant provinces, it was, I think, on Easter Sunday, or some other high festival of the church; thousands of the Greeks inhabiting the city were assembled at the cathedral, where the venerable patriarch was administering the communion. The Turks, infuriated on finding that the slaves they had so long crushed beneath their haughty feet, had still retained in their degradation some spark of the unextinguishable love of liberty, now rushed to the church, crying out for vengeance. The Greeks, whose necks were still too completely under the Moslem yoke to attempt resistance, even had their numbers been adequate, fell back before the irritated crowd. The patriarch, bending beneath the weight of eighty years, stood on the steps of the altar, his withered hands uplifted to bless the people; the Turks rushed towards him, they seized him, and tore him down to the ground; they twined their sacrilegious hands in the flow-

ing hair that fell round his venerated head ; they dragged him over the stone pavement of the church through the open street to the foot of the nearest tree, and there, still in his pontifical robes, with the last accents of the half uttered blessing trembling on his withered lips, they passed a common rope round his neck, and hung him along with three of his cardinals. It did not take long to extinguish the feeble spark of life in that aged frame. As soon as he was dead they cut him down and flung him into the Bosphorus. By some strange accident the body did not sink. That same evening a Russian vessel was sailing towards the entrance of the Black Sea, on its way to Odessa, when suddenly a sight presented itself which caused the superstitious crew to fall on their knees, seized with a reverential awe. Gently borne along by the current, the body of the murdered patriarch came floating by. The holy old man lay on the bosom of the waters, still and serene as a child in dreamless sleep. His pontifical robes were folded decently around him, his hands were yet in the posture of prayer, his hoary head moved slowly with its undulating pillow, and the distinctive mark of his priesthood, the long snowy hair, flowed over the wave. With a respect amounting to worship, the Russian sailors drew the corpse from the water, and carried it to Odessa, where he was buried. He has since been canonised, and is now considered one of their most powerful saints.

In the cool of the evening we went down to the tower of the Seraskier, whose formidable height would certainly have deterred me from ascending, but for the enthusiastic account of the view from the top which Monsieur de B—— had given us. As we traversed the great court which is surrounded by the barracks, and drew near the steps on which this ponderous pillar is placed, I was startled by

a loud clanking sound quite close to me; when I looked round I saw a number of wretched-looking galley slaves, chiefly Asiatics, loaded with chains, who were shuffling off the steps to make way for us. They seemed most utterly abject and miserable, as though, in conscious guilt, they had accepted unresistingly their degradation in the scale of humanity. We passed a little door, and, conducted by an active young Turk, began to ascend the interminable flights of steps; twenty times we stopped and said that no view could compensate for the fatigue, and still he urged us on; till at last on reaching the top and entering the little circular gallery, from whence as you walk round and round, the most glorious panorama in the world is displayed to view, we felt we would have gone ten times as high to witness such an unparalleled sight. It is not too much to say that any one who leaves this place without having visited the Seraskier's Tower, has not seen Constantinople; for they can form no idea of what the city actually is except in this bird's-eye view of it.

May 9th.

I had an adventure this morning, which was far from agreeable, though very characteristic of the East. I had gone to walk in the "petit champ des morts," below the windows of the hotel, with my little niece. For some time it was very pleasant in the cool shades, which were perfectly deserted and quiet, but I could have wished them rather less so, when to my astonishment I saw, in the course of a few minutes, that troops of those great, starved-looking dogs, of whose ferocity I had a tolerably just idea, were coming rapidly towards us from all quarters. I could not imagine what attracted them, till the poor child, quite pale with terror, showed me a piece of

bread which she held in her hand, and which it was evident they had smelt at an incredible distance. In a moment we were surrounded by a perfect army of fierce, voracious animals, with their sharp teeth, and glaring eyes, snuffing the air, and closing round us. They looked as if they would have made but a mouthful of the poor little girl, round whom they circled, growling ominously, and coming nearer every instant; and they were scarce less formidable to myself, when I took the bread from her, and began to feel that our position was really far from safe; for I dreaded that, if I threw it away, it would be but a morsel to some one of them, while it was far from unlikely that those who were disappointed would turn their rage on us. Some of them were large and fierce enough to be no mean opponent even to a strong man; and I had heard of several instances of their attacking human beings. It was of no use, however, to stand there, and watch them growing more and more furious, so I began, imperceptibly, to draw near the gate, dragging the child, quite paralysed with fear, after me; the dogs, howling and raging, followed close, and even took my dress between their teeth. When I was close to the door, I flung the unfortunate piece of bread as far from me as I could, and while they all bounded towards it, we darted through the gate, and took a rapid turning in the path which carried us out of their sight at once. By a circuitous road we reached the hotel, and so escaped them; but the adventure inspired me with a very legitimate terror for these horrible dogs, who haunt this beautiful city more like beasts of prey after a carnage, than the domestic animals of an inhabited town.

We had been invited by Captain O——, to go on board of his ship, in order to see the sultan pass on his

way to prayers; as, however little that illustrious personage may be worth seeing for himself, his procession of gay caïques is said to be very magnificent. Before proceeding thither, we went to visit those very remarkable ancient cisterns, which have been so much talked of. It seems generally admitted now, were it but for the architectural excellence of their construction, that they date from the earliest period of the Greek empire, although nothing of their origin is accurately known; but I had certainly no idea of the singular and imposing spectacle they offer in their present state.

Entering by a small door, in a low, half-ruined looking building, which would not seem to indicate any thing worth seeing, we found ourselves, after descending several flights of wooden steps, in a vast, seemingly interminable vault, filled with water, and, as far as our eyes could penetrate, supported by long ranges of pillars. The intense darkness, and damp heavy chill on the air, were a strange contrast to the warm sunshine we had left; and the loud, hollow echoes, which the slightest whisper elicited from the unseen walls, or the long-continued sound produced by a stone falling into the sombre, and, as yet, unfathomed waters, had a most striking effect. The extent of this subterraneous lake is supposed to be immense, but it has never been at all ascertained, as it is extremely dangerous to penetrate beyond a certain limit. There was formerly a boat, on which any one who chose was conveyed some little distance; but this has been given up, in consequence of a melancholy event which occurred some years since. Two adventurous young men, Englishmen, I believe, embarked alone in it, in spite of all the warnings they received, and insisted in penetrating further than any one had ever before attempted: they were seen to glide away, over the dark, cold waters,

and for a time the light of their torches appeared occasionally among the pillars, but soon the last faint spark disappeared, and they were never more heard of.

We got so chilled in these damp vaults, that we could not venture to remain long; and, cold as we had been, when we came out, we were very satisfactorily roasted again before we reached the *V*——— steamer, where, under the awnings spread over the deck, we at last found an agreeable intermediate climate. The prospect of seeing the sultan, however, and any pleasure we might have expected to derive from the sight, did most literally end in smoke; for his highness chose to embark from his summer palace, several miles down the Bosphorus, and go quite in another direction from that which he usually took, and which would have led him past us; so that all we saw or heard of the whole proceedings was the noisy cannonading of the Turkish ships around us, to announce his departure. We nevertheless managed to console ourselves very well, in spending an hour or two most pleasantly with our countrymen. It is so strange, on board of a man-of-war, to find one's self, in whatever country one may be, so completely transported into England again. Independent of the language and the appearance of the men, the comfort, order, and neatness of every little detail belong to no other nation. The French, as it is well known, are now endeavouring to emulate the English navy in many respects; but I had an opportunity of judging lately how far they fall short in these minor points, on board of one of their own most splendid three-deckers, where the contrast was quite palpable.

Monsieur de B—— brought in with him to dinner to-day a Frenchman, who has been naturalised in this country for many years. He wears the Turkish dress, and

looks scarcely European, but his conversation, which was clever and interesting, astonished me much, from the unqualified praise which he bestowed on the Turkish nation. Every day and hour which I pass in this place, and every little insignificant event which tells on the impression ultimately produced, has but served to bring their national character before me in a more repulsive point of view; but if we would judge impartially, and surely the man who judges otherwise degrades himself, we must listen all the more eagerly to any extenuating circumstances, when the opinion we have already formed is unfavourable. It is but fair to give some weight to the words of a person so long stationary here, but I did not think he brought forward any sound arguments in support of his assertions. We spoke of the palpable evils, which any might discern in the moral condition of Turkey; the corrupt government, the vile and hateful creed, the systematic selfishness and heartless cruelty of the people themselves; but to this he merely answered by breaking out into an enthusiastic account of the improvement on their institutions and the progress of civilisation, and finished off by telling triumphantly how willing they were to send their children to the schools of the Lazarists, which perhaps accounted, naturally and reasonably, for some of his good will towards them.

May 10th.

My last day at Constantinople will, I think, leave a deeper impression on my mind than any of those which preceded it, although, as it was Sunday, it was not destined to any very stirring amusement. When the service was over, we went down to the quay, and hired a caïque to take us over to the burial grounds of Scutari, where I had not yet been. There was a strong breeze, which sent our

little bark quivering through the waves with great rapidity; but the sun, as usual, was so intensely hot, that we were very glad when it glided on to the shelving beach of Scutari. It is a pretty and characteristic village, extending some distance along the sea-shore; directly behind it rises the fertile hill, where the vast cemeteries are spread out, sloping upwards, and extending far on all sides. There is a verse in the Koran, which announces that the Turkish Empire will one day pass from Europe altogether, and exist only for Asia. In this persuasion, for centuries back, the Turks have brought all faithful Mussulmen to be interred on the Asiatic shore, which accounts for the immense extent of their burial places, some of the tombs bearing an inscription as ancient as the eighth century, and there are new comers every day to swell the quiet population of this empire of the dead; a road leads through the midst of it, from whence, every here and there, a little gate gives admittance into the enormous cemetery.

The sun was just setting as we passed through one of these; and the dying smile of that gorgeous eastern day, flashed with such exceeding brilliancy on the clear sea and lucid sky, that we almost gasped at the sudden change, when, advancing some little way, we found that we had plunged into the very deepest and coolest of shades, and had passed from a gay and living world to the very heart of that most awful of all desolation—the abode of silent, ever working corruption. We looked up, and saw, losing itself in an immensity which no eye could limit, the vast domain of those sleepers in the dust; around on every side, stretching on and on in unbroken gloom, rose thousands on thousands of gigantic cypress trees, each one dark, stately, and solitary—and yet, they were so incalculably numerous, that their sombre branches, mingling together,

formed an impenetrable dome through which not a wandering sunbeam found its way; and beneath, yet more sad and silent, yet more illimitable and unnumbered, was the forest of tombs strewn on the rich green grass, as thick as the white blossoms of the fruit tree by the autumn wind, each cold gray stone strangely distinct in the surrounding darkness.

And through this wilderness of mortality you may wander on and on, till your eye is bewildered and your limbs are weary, and still it is ever the same—the same dim twilight gloom pervading it unchangeably, for not a ray from all that burning heaven's wealth of light can penetrate these shades; the sun may rise and set, but its rising and setting are only known in the deepening of the shadows to utter night, and the blending of the night again with a more tempered darkness; and the stars awake in the evening sky, and expire in the morning light unseen; and the moon, rolling through the deep blue air, has no power to make one single tomb more ghastly in her pallid rays; and there is ever the same solemn silence, for all signs of human life seem as things that are not. The storms rage without unheard, and when the subtle wind sweeps over the dwellings of those who are at rest, it passes noiselessly, for it cannot stir the unbending branches of the sullen trees who watch them; nor is the air, heavy and cold, ever sweetened by a single breath of summer; the seasons, passing over the earth, bring no change to the cypress, whose verdure they cannot freshen, or to the tombstone, which nothing can make less chill and impenetrable.

Nature would seem to have abandoned this territory unto death. It is his kingdom; and there, in the cold dim shades, he broods eternally over his hidden subjects, and lets no bright sunshine nor sweet influence from the spring without invade his gloomy solitude. I

was tired, and sat down by the foot of a tree, whilst the rest of the party wandered on a considerable way. As the sound of their footsteps died away altogether, it was a very strange feeling to find myself the only living being amongst myriads and myriads of dead. One of the most blessed operations of nature is the salutary reflection which it suggests to the mind through the medium of its varied aspects, and the lessons which such a scene as this could teach must necessarily be new and strange.

Over one grave—over one single grave—we all know well what thoughts arise; for if it be of one we have loved, we go not, for a time at least, beyond the bitter certainty, that the eyes which made our life's sunshine shall smile on us no more; and even if it be the tomb of a stranger, our human sympathies are all so warmly moved, that we looked no deeper within it, than to the tears of the living which have steeped its mould; if it be a child that is laid to rest, we say, alas! for the mother, and if a mother, alas! for the child; but here, with the countless sleepers round me, who centuries before had put off their humanity, these feelings had no place. They suggested the strange thought, how methodical is the routine of decay in all the various phases of creation; even as, season after season, the autumn wind arises to chase away the summer's store of fading leaves, that bloomed their little hour, and now must rot on the chill earth, so, age after age, the blast of death comes up from the dark infinity to sweep off the passing generation, ripe for corruption; and even as century on century send in their harvest to eternity, so with every thousand years an empire crumbles down to be a yet more gorgeous tribute to destruction, and who shall say if the periodical perishing of worlds themselves are not the minute bells of eternity!

But there was a yet more glorious lesson to be gathered in this solemn burial place, from these unnumbered tombs, these crawling worms, and shapeless ashes, and this was the strong sentiment of man's immortality, which seemed to arise from amongst them, confuting with horror the impious thought that He who in the earliest hour of the wakening intellect dawns on the mind as first Cause and Creator, could ever be known as the Destroyer of His own works. The blessed revelation which tells how the breath that once made man a living soul shall breathe yet again, and bone shall come to his bone, and flesh to his flesh, here goes hand in hand, as ever, with the nature that testifies of the things not seen by those which are.

In this peopled desert—so still, so eloquent, so utterly desolate—the mind is oppressed, as I have never felt it elsewhere, by the mere force of external circumstances. The things of life seem to recede from it altogether, and the space allotted to man's existence shrinks to a very shadow, because the hopes and fears, whereby we colour and falsify that existence, and give it an undue weight, seem so utterly vain in presence of these tens of thousands of speechless monitors, all one common mass of senseless decay! And how strange it was, as we emerged from that dark city of sepulchres, passing from the country of the dead to the country of the living, to find ourselves suddenly in face of that other city, flaunting in the gay sunset, with its busy population running to and fro, stirring the quiet air with the hum of their many voices; it would almost seem as though either the life or the death were a dream, for of the two, thus side by side, the living, with their power of thought, and their foreknowledge of things to come from their experience of things already past, were not less

regardless of the dead, than the dead, in their sullen, senseless rest, of the hope-haunted living.

Indeed, the Turks, who would seem to carry their indifference to all natural ties and affections, even to their feelings towards the departed, in connexion with whom they are generally so sacred, often choose the cemetery as their place of resort for amusement and revelry. In these countries, a funeral is a gay procession, with its flowers, and its incense, and its coloured dresses; and nothing struck me so much on my first visit to England, after an absence of many years, as the contrast which our customs present in the sable hearse and gloomy attendants, who conduct our corpses to their vaulted tombs. We lost our way among the winding paths and green mounds—all so similar—which divide the streets of this pretty village, and wandered about, looking vainly for our boat, till we were fortunate enough to meet with the editor of the newspaper who dines with us, and who conducted us safely to the shore. He told us, that it was in the burial-ground of Scutari that his father had met with the adventure which made so much noise at the time: when his gun having gone off unexpectedly, he had accidentally wounded a Turkish boy, and been nearly murdered, in consequence, by some Turks who came up. They dragged him to prison, had him bastinadoed, and it was with the greatest difficulty that his ambassador could obtain his release. So much for the consistency of the Mahomedans, who beat and ill-use a fellow-creature over the very grave-stones where they have hewn a little vessel, that the birds may come and drink the rain water, and so enable the deceased to practise the virtue of charity, as they interpret it, while his bones are already mouldering away.

We were amused at dinner-time by an anecdote of the sultan, which was given us as an instance that, despite of the gigantic powers who are even now creeping invisibly around his tottering throne, he still at times exercises his power of arbitrary authority. An unfortunate Greek cobbler having offended him in some way, his highness ordered that the shops of all the Greek shoemakers in the city should be closed; which summary proceeding created the greatest possible excitement, as the Turks could by no means consent to go without papouches, and the manufactures of that necessary article were principally of that offending nation. The disturbance was indeed so great that the despotic order was finally revoked.

The sultan's sister is about to be married, and her *trousseau*, as well as the presents which her *fiancé* sends her, have been parading the streets for some days before we arrived; these gentlemen describe it as a truly Oriental sight, consisting of long processions of slaves walking in pairs with baskets on their heads containing rich dresses, sweetmeats, and perfumes. The intellectual powers of the bride, however, would not seem very much developed, as her favourite amusement consists in throwing oranges from the window of her palace on the Bosphorus into the caïques which pass below, the excitement of the occupation consisting in the success or failure of her attempts to hit the boatmen on the head.

CHAPTER XII.

Departure—Duet with an old Turk—Extraordinary Performance of the Sentinel—Entrance to the Euxine—The Summer shut out—Wintry and tempestuous Weather—The Captain's Account of the Black Sea—The Storm above—Its Effect below—The first Night on the Black Sea—Daylight—Scene below—Scene above—Varna—Curious Episode on the Balkan War—Anecdote connected with the Russian Navy—Mouth of the Danube—Town of Fanal—Desolate Appearance of the River—The Cossack Guard—Their wretched Fate—Dreary Prospect—The Turks anathematise the Black Sea—The Town of Galatz—Some Account of the actual State of Bucharest—Story of the Wallachian Lady—Yassy—Ibrail—The Lady of Ibrail—Its fashionable Society—The Body of the murdered Man—Its Reception at the various Vessels—Adventure of the Count and the Turkish Barber.

May 11th.

"La grande salle" this morning exhibited a rather amusing scene of bustle, as we all got ready to start on our long voyage. We were leaving Constantinople, the long beloved of so many nations who held her one after another in their dominion, and then gave up the prize to the next succeeding conqueror; but with all the poetical and moral reflections we ought to have made on our departure from such a place, no sounds were to be heard but such ignoble exclamations as will bring forcibly to the recollection of most travellers their departure from most places —added in this instance to the screams of a Greek at receiving only twice as much as he ought to have got

from the French gentleman, to whom he had acted as servant, and the vociferations of an American trying to persuade the French gentleman's nephew to buy another little rusty dagger, when he had already bought four, and a duet between myself and an old Turk, who was teaching me to sing the call to prayers of the Muezzins. Kentucky alone, serene as usual in the midst of it all, with his waterproof cloak on (the same in which he embarked from New York), and his carpet-bag beside him, gave the breakfast his serious attention, for which he alone seemed to feel any appetite; as that of the other gentlemen was lost in the anxiety excited by the non-arrival of the passports, a delay resulting solely from the captiousness of the civil authorities, though it might have caused us serious inconvenience. At last they arrived in due form, the screaming Greek was all but kicked down stairs by Monsieur de B——, the Armenian became silent because Monsieur de B——'s nephew did buy the dagger, the last bar of my wonderful duet was abruptly hurried over, and with all these expedients we succeeded in being on board several hours too soon.

It was a little Austrian steamer, that we were to go in as far as Galatz; and one-half of its not very ample deck had been railed off for the use of the Moslem passengers, whose numbers greatly exceeded ours. They were all installed already, and quite comfortable, for each man had his own carpet and his own pipe and seemed quite unconscious of the presence of his neighbour, though they were so closely wedged together that to us nothing was visible but a compact mass of turbans. The passengers soon collected on board; Madame T—— and her brother arrived, and the Greek professor was also there; the mad doctor, to our infinite joy, had apparently had enough of the sea notwith-

standing his specific, and had remained at Constantinople, Monsieur de B—— and Monsieur Ernest were the only two of the French party who took the route by the Danube, and Kentucky alone was left of the Americans to do the honours of that nation. Late in the afternoon we weighed anchor, just as a light mist which had hung over us all the morning rolled back from the city, and displayed it in the full light of the evening sun; as though she had unveiled herself that our last look might see her in all her beauty, like a friend who wears a smile at parting, that we may not remember his countenance only in sadness.

The distance from Constantinople to the Black Sea, which is only twenty miles, was achieved by our little steamer at a pace which left us no time to admire again the scenery we had seen to so much advantage when coasting slowly along in our little caïque, and which is indeed the only way by which the exquisite changes of landscape this little space contains, can be thoroughly appreciated. We stopped for a moment near the sultan's palace, when our attention was irresistibly arrested by the solemn performance of the Turkish sentinel, who was parading to and fro on a narrow strip of glaring stones, close to the water's edge. I am profoundly ignorant on the subject of all military manœuvres, but it struck me that there was something peculiarly ludicrous in the whole appearance and proceedings of this functionary, who looked as though he would only be tempted to face an enemy because he was too lazy to run away. First, he wore slippers, and hugged his bayonet to his bosom as though it were a baby; and then his evolutions were so very elaborate, as he marched at a slow jog trot to the end of his station, where he seemed to present arms to some

unseen dignitary, and then facing round, set off again with the most curious hop I ever saw.

Passing rapidly along the shore, where lie the quiet, smiling villages of Therapia and Buyukdere, we swept on to the gate of the Euxine, where a change of scene awaited us which the most vivid imagination could scarce have anticipated. This narrow entrance is formed by two jutting promontories, which at a little distance seem almost to meet each other, each crowned with their fortified castles. In that of Europe, named Romelihessar, a great part of the Janissaries were killed; a thousand, they say, in a day.

Scarcely had we passed between those points, when they closed upon us, shutting out not only the fair Bosphorus with its quiet scenes of sunny beauty, but even, as it seemed, the summer also, whose smiles lit up their loveliness so well; for we plunged at once into as angry a sea as ever tossed its foam into the face of heaven, and in half an hour after we were in the midst of a scene so wintry and desolate, that the very recollection of sunshine and flowery landscapes in repose, could not but fade before it; the serene blue sky we were to see no more, had given place to a heavy pall of black and lowering clouds, across which a chill blast was sweeping in violent gusts; instead of bright gardens and still waters, nothing was to be seen but a wilderness of boiling surge, where the waves were lashing themselves to a degree of impetuous fury I have never seen equalled. The horizon was bounded by the low range of hills dimly seen in the dense mist, and behind which hung as it were a curtain of thick darkness, where the sheet lightning flashed at intervals, like the smile of the storm in triumph of its coming victory.

The captain of our steamer, who did not in the least conceal

from us that we were likely to have a tremendous night, told us that the Black Sea was well qualified in this expressive term, by which it is known in all languages, as he had sailed on it for many years, and never yet seen its inhospitable waters in repose. In the winter it is a most perilous undertaking to attempt crossing it, forty or fifty vessels on an average being lost every year; and in summer there is always at the very least so turbulent and unpleasant a swell, that he himself, who had crossed the Atlantic without any inconvenience, never failed to feel unwell.

We were destined, however, to a yet more unfavourable reception. As we got fairly out of sight of land, every thing grew ominous of coming warfare. Just at nightfall a vivid flash of lightning suddenly tore asunder the huge black curtain which seemed to hang motionless against the sky, and from the vast rent the liberated tempest came thundering forth, all fire and fury, and rushed howling over the agitated sea, maddening the convulsed waters till spray, and foam, and rain, became one wild confusion, and our little vessel shook and shivered as the billows wreathed themselves around it, and dashed down raging on its deck. A scene more fiercely desolate could not well be conceived; the mournful howling of the wind, and the roaring of the ocean, whose breast it was tearing up, made a savage music altogether which was as awful as it was sublime; and the violent pitching of the ship rendered it scarce possible to distinguish the black flying rack above from the yet blacker mass of surge below. When matters came to this crisis, of course all went below, excepting the motionless Turks; and certainly if the storm were sublime above, it was most ludicrous in its effects down stairs. There was a continued and involuntary polka dancing on the part of the most sedate passengers, chairs and tables careering fran-

tically to and fro with a confused din, consisting of lamentations in Turkish, anathemas in Greek, angry mutterings of misery in French, abrupt and comprehensible groans in German, and over all the piteous voice of Kentucky, giving a pretty good guess that he had never been so wretched before.

From the ladies' cabin (which I entered head foremost, after having been thrown down stairs by one lurch of the vessel, violently flung under the table in the saloon by another, and jerked out again before any one had time to help me), every article of furniture had been removed; and mingled invocations to St. Nicholas and the prophet, rose from various agitated heaps in the several corners. After knocking my head on the four sides of the room, I was precipitated into a berth, where I was destined to pass the night, clinging to the wall lest I should fall out, and be compelled to continue this violent exercise.

The storm never abated during the interminable hours, till daylight, and although I do not suppose any one slept in the whole vessel, the sufferers at last became quite passive, and nothing was to be heard but an occasional groan; directly below me, an unfortunate lady was extended on a mattress on the floor, which was inlaid with polished wood; every time the vessel rolled, the mattress and its burden slid down the room to the opposite wall, where the lady received a violent blow on the head, and then, as the ship righted again, returned slowly to their place. There was a species of fascination in this slow torture, which occupied me the whole night; and such was the state to which we were all reduced, that although the lady who thus helplessly acted the part of a living pendulum, was my own mother, I lay composedly watching her sail away to the other side, and waited till she should come back and knock her head, without even making an

effort to relieve her. Daylight brought no improvement in our position, and I alone had strength enough left to creep up on deck. I managed to crawl round to offer my assistance to the inmates of the respective berths before I left the room; but I received no other answer from any, than an entreaty that I would put a speedy termination to their existence. I could not adopt so violent a measure, though I felt that my own demise would have been a relief, so I left them to their miseries, and with much difficulty crept up on deck, where I was dragged to a pile of cushions laid out for me by a sailor, and there I sunk to move no more all day, catching a glimpse in my passage across the deck of the compact mass of turbans waving to and fro, with an instinctive consciousness that each individual Turk was sea-sick.

The scene was not the less dreary that the light of day had risen over it, and a cold, piercing blast shrieked most dismally among the sails, which they had vainly put up to try and steady the ship. Throughout the whole of that long day it continued thus. None of the other passengers came from below, and as I lay half asleep, half awake, on the deck, every now and then the scenes we had been in the midst of, only yesterday, rose up before me; the golden city sparkling in sunshine, the bird peopled gardens, the soft rippling waters; till a great cold wave, plunging into the vessel, and drenching me with foam, recalled me to the contrasted reality, and showed me the black, boiling sea, and wild tempestuous sky.

In the afternoon, we lay to for half an hour, opposite to the town of Varna, so celebrated in the Balkan war, as having stood a siege of six months against an enormous Russian force. It is so stormy a roadstead that I could only obtain a glimpse of it by clinging to the side of the ship for a few minutes as we reeled to and fro, but

this cursory glance was sufficient to show me so poor and wretched-looking a town, that I could not conceive how a single troop of cavalry should not have been sufficient to demolish it at once; yet I am told that this immense army, which though it sustained considerable loss in the march across the Balkan, had yet an enormous force, sat down before it for many months.

There were several Russian vessels lying round us, with all their rigging seemingly in the trimmest order, but I knew how far to trust to the flourishing appearance which Russia gives to all her naval appurtenances, from a little circumstance which occurred not long since in Athens. We had gone on board of a Russian corvette, and had greatly admired, not only the neatness and order everywhere displayed, but the attention which seemed to be bestowed on the comfort of the sailors, as their neat hammocks were all ranged round the deck just as in an English ship. Shortly after, a Russian lady, a friend of ours, went a voyage in this same ship, and returned long before the time she had originally intended, because she was so uttterly disgusted with the misery and ill-treatment of the unfortunate crew. The hammocks were a mere sham got up for show, and her description of the want of cleanliness and comfort, and the barbarous punishments daily administered, was most dreadful. The wind became favourable as soon as we left Varna, but the night was not the less tempestuous; and I was very glad there was nothing to be seen before the darkness set in, as it was quite impossible to stand upright.

May 12th.

When I once more tottered on deck this morning, I found we were not above twenty miles from the Danube. Of the seven mouths of this important river, that by which

we were about to enter belongs to Russia, who, in the late treaty entered into with Austria, modestly gave up the other six, and reserved to herself the only one of these channels which is practicable for large vessels.

At nine o'clock we reached the small desolate town of Fanal, whose light-house, both by night and by day, is a very beacon of hope to all the unfortunate victims of the Black Sea, as it stands at the entrance of the Danube; and sailing in amongst a number of vessels of all nations, which were anchored there, we at last, to our infinite satisfaction, glided from amidst these turbulent waters on to the broad bosom of this stupendous river. At the opening it is of immense breadth, and for some time we could scarce distinguish the muddy banks from the muddy waters, all was so completely of the same uniform hue; but gradually, as we passed rapidly on, and fairly entered the delta of the Danube, we found ourselves in a magnificent stream, which was rolling calmly down between Moldavia and Bessarabia. It mattered little, however, what name we gave to the shores on either side, for the land scarcely rose above the level of the water, and consisted of a never-ending range of flat swamps filled with reeds, of a dark brown colour, and half-overflowed.

The same unvarying miserable prospect followed us the whole day, enlivened only by a most palpable and characteristic proof of the Russian dominion, which met us every half-league. Placed on the edge of the river, sometimes on the swamp, and more often altogether in the water, at each of these stated intervals, stood a little wretched hut, which, when we first saw it, we could not believe was actually destined to be the habitation of a human being in the midst of this pestilential marsh; but on approaching nearer, we found that a sentry-box was placed in front of it, in which stood a

miserable-looking Cossack, up to the knees in water, with his spear erect, which he duly elevated as we passed him. There would have been something extremely ludicrous in the appearance of these poor creatures, keeping guard on a bed of mud, with all proper formality, and with the full military accoutrements, were not their fate, in actual fact, so very pitiable.

They form a line, posted at regular distances, a considerable way up the river, and are relieved every six months; but six months of existence, half drowned in an unwholesome bog, which actually exhales pestilence, generally proves fatal to the strongest, and very few survive the allotted term; one after after another is taken ill and dies in this dreary solitude, without a living being near them—their miserable fate unknown, until their successor arrives, when the dead body is thrown out of the wretched hut, and the living victim installed in its stead. Certainly, wherever in our wanderings we have met with the slightest trace of the Russian dominion, we have found it stamped with the same perfect indifference to all human suffering, and careless waste of human life; and these melancholy wretches were the only living things we saw.

The whole of our first day on this much vaunted river, was through as desolate a waste as could be imagined: nothing to be seen but a wide extent of marshy ground, without a tree or shrub to enliven the dismal prospect. On the Moldavian side a few fishing huts were occasionally to be descried, seemingly deserted by their inmates, and towards evening a slight rise was perceptible in the country, but night closed in before any distinct change had taken place in the landscape; nevertheless, although to any one descending the river this portion of it must appear most dismal, to those who, like ourselves, had just escaped, all bruised

and weary, from the horrors of the Black Sea, it would certainly appear, as it did to us, the most charming of scenes. The luxury of sailing quietly on the smooth rolling waters was, indeed, so great, that we looked forward to the seventeen days we were to pass in a similar manner until we reached Vienna, with the greatest delight; though, before we contrasted it with our late miseries, we had feared it might prove rather tedious, as we were to be on quarantine a greater part of the way. Happily the restriction does not extend to the Turkish shore, and we anticipate much amusement in landing constantly, when we shall come to somewhat firmer ground than that now around us. Even the Turks, who I positively aver, during our three days' storm remained every one of them sitting upright, cross-legged and perfectly motionless, seemed quite lively, and began to comb out their beards in the most sprightly manner. However, when I went politely to inquire after their health, in the usual pantomimic manner, they simultaneously shook their fists in the direction of the Black Sea, with an angry howl, which was most expressive.

May 13th.

The first sight which presented itself this morning was the town of Galatz, before which we had anchored in the night, and I could not well imagine any place more perfectly uninviting in appearance. We could not, of course, land, as we were in quarantine; but the view from the river was of a nature to render us very passive under the privation. A confused mass of wretched-looking buildings, mostly of wood, sloping down to the water, and divided by unpaved streets, swimming in liquid mud, was the aspect in which this the principal port of Moldavia appeared to us;

and the poor puny-looking inhabitants, small in stature, and enervated seemingly by the unhealthy climate, did not tend to enliven this scene, as they splashed to and fro, clad from head to foot in their brown woollen garments. I must say, even before this journey, we were not very favourably disposed towards either Wallachia or Moldavia, being intimately acquainted with the peculiarities of both these countries, from the close intercourse which subsists between them and Greece. There is a regular importation to Athens every year of young Wallachian ladies who have arrived at a marriageable age, and ample means are thus afforded us of an insight into their manners and customs.

The city of Bucharest, large, rich, and prosperous, is, perhaps, of all the towns which have been rendered by fashionable vices the very nest of corruption, the most utterly detestable, from the extent of depravation to which society has there attained. The mania of the upper classes of its inhabitants, who are extremely wealthy, is to imitate Paris and the Parisians in every thing, which they attempt by exaggerating even the vices of that corrupt city and its gay inhabitants; they resort to every species of luxury and dissipation, and are constantly making a display of their riches in the worst possible taste; disdaining to drive with less than four horses to their gaudy carriages, along the streets soaked with mud, and laid with beams of wood and rough stones. Gambling, and similar propensities, absorb all the young men so completely, that even the most improvident parents could not venture to consign a daughter to their hands, and they are therefore obliged to seek husbands for them elsewhere, which accounts for the yearly cargo that arrives at Athens.

There is a regular system of negotiation for the arrange-

ment of these marriages, which is carried on and terminated by some intermediate person, without the parties ever meeting at all. Pecuniary considerations are of course the basis to the whole affair; some shrewd and obliging old lady in Greece proposes the young girl, or rather her portion, to various eligible persons, and consigns her to the highest bidder. The settlements are made, the trousseau ordered, the marriage announced, and then the bride arrives from Wallachia, and sees her *fiancé* for the first time. Strange to say, this hateful mode of bargaining generally produces very happy matches. It is extremely rare that the persons most interested make any objection to each other when they meet: the only instance which came to my knowledge, was the case of a couple who are now a perfect picture of conjugal felicity.

A marriage had been negotiated, in the manner described, between a Greek, high in office, and a Wallachian lady of considerable wealth; the whole affair had been concluded, and they were to meet, for the first time, at Syra, where the bride had to perform her quarantine. Now it so chanced that the gentleman was, without exception, the plainest man in Athens, and the young lady noted in all Bucharest for her deficiency in good looks. The first meeting took place in the Lazaretto; and they approached the rails which divided them, with the anxious look of scrutiny with which they could not fail to examine the future husband and wife; but they had no sooner caught a glimpse of each other, than both started back with a cry of horror, and fled, exclaiming —"Jamais!" "jamais!" This first demonstration of natural feeling, did not, however, in the slightest degree, interfere with the ultimate arrangements; the lady's father was not at all disposed to give the gentleman back his word, the gentleman himself reflected that the lady's portion was all the

higher for her personal deficiencies, and the bride was consoled by the promise of a wedding-dress from Paris: so the match was concluded, and they are now the happiest couple I know.

The society of Yassy, the capital of Moldavia is, I believe, much in the same style as that of Bucharest, but the climate is more agreeable, the town is cleaner, and the country round it pre-eminently beautiful. Madame T——, told me, that it is on all sides surrounded by magnificent forests, and large tracts of wooded land. She left us to-day, along with her brother and the Greek professor, in order to proceed thither, overland, from Galatz, having first to perform her quarantine in the Lazaretto here, which is a dismal looking building in the middle of the river. We had our choice of landing there, with her, to wait the arrival of the steamer, in its downward course, which goes no further than Galatz, and will immediately return with us; or of remaining on board of our present vessel, and going on with it to Ibrail, where it has to land some cargo.

We preferred the latter course, and we were soon under weigh again, with our reduced complement of passengers, consisting now only of those who are going on all the way —the two Frenchmen, two or three Germans, and ourselves. Ibrail, formerly a Turkish fortress, is now the principal fort of Wallachia; and I had an opportunity of acquiring a great deal of information respecting it, from a pretty little Perote, whose home it was, and who had come with us from Constantinople, to rejoin her husband there. It seems a populous and flourishing little town, and I was greatly amused with her pompous account of the extreme civilisation of its society, which consists chiefly of merchants, who export from it the corn with which this country is so abundantly supplied. They have great pre-

tensions, apparently, to refinement, and consider themselves quite Europeanised. But there seems to me something extremely absurd in the attempts of the good inhabitants of this remote little Wallachian town, unknown to most people beyond the swamp where it is embedded, to keep themselves on a level with other countries, as far at least as their follies and vanities are concerned; trying to follow up their fashionable amusements, and expensive absurdities in dress, &c., and, of course, by the most ridiculous exaggeration. Their intercourse with Bucharest facilitates this unfortunate ambition.

Certainly, were it not for the ultimate diffusion of good which is likely to arise from the means of communication being opened between a semi-barbarous country and other nations, I should be disposed to consider them but so many channels for conveying poison from land to land, for I have always remarked, that the first influences received are essentially bad. The necessity of an increased facility of intercourse for the propagation of the Gospel, is, of course, an all-sufficient motive to induce us to hasten this universal work, by every means in our power; but I have never failed to perceive, that the first step of civilisation is to be traced in the reception by poor human nature, so rich a soil for a pernicious seed, of the gay and fascinating vices, the crimes that walk forth in the noon-day in our proudest cities, decked in a gilding and tinsel that renders their form more hideous.

The French language, sadly mangled it is true, is now universal in Wallachia and Moldavia; but at Ibrail, my little friend told me, it was still rather more rare, Wallachian and Lyric being yet more generally spoken. When we reached the town itself, we found, that if it were worth seeing, we were not to have that gratification, as it lies behind a range of sandy heights, leaving nothing

visible from the river but a few corn warehouses of wood, where a number of half-clad Bulgarians were occupied in transferring the grain to the numerous vessels—Turkish, Russian, and others, which lay waiting it. The Danube is in high flood at this moment, and it carried us back to Galatz, with a rapidity very different from the tedious progress upwards against the current; indeed the late inundations have been so violent, that it is not impossible we may be delayed; and they have caused the waters of this stupendous stream to be so widely dispersed, that all the grandeur is lost, which such a volume rushing down would naturally have produced.

A chill, gloomy evening set in, as we took up our station once more near the Lazaretto of Galatz. Mud is so much the distinguishing characteristic of Wallachia, that it seems to pervade every thing. The very sky looks muddy—and ever since we entered the Danube, has been of a dull brown colour, though there are neither clouds nor rain. I was leaning over the side of the steamer, watching the sluggish waves of a similar hue, as they rippled up against the side, when my attention was attracted by an indistinct object floating slowly towards us, with the current. From the moment I perceived it, my eyes became fixed on it with a sort of instinctive horror; as it came nearer and nearer, and at last got entangled in the paddle-wheel directly below me, then it turned slowly, with the undulating movement of the dark waters, and I saw distinctly, in the dim twilight, the white ghastly face of a corpse. My exclamation drew the attention of the captain, who, seeing what it was, gave orders that it should be disengaged from the wheel and drawn out of the water. Two or three of the sailors went down into the boat for that purpose, and had already lifted up the lifeless mass, when the wet hair falling

back revealed a frightful gash on the temple, which showed, beyond doubt, that the body was that of a murdered man. No sooner did he ascertain this, than the captain ordered them instantly to throw it back into the water untouched, which was accordingly done. I asked the reason, of what seemed to me a most unfeeling proceeding; and he then told me, that it was to avoid the slightest apparent implication for himself, in an affair which might possibly come before the tribunals of the country. He seemed not alone in his dread of this risk, for when I found him determined to take no measures for ensuring a quiet grave to one who had died so cruel a death, I returned to watch the helpless corpse, as it floated on towards the numerous vessels which lay further down; its progress was in like manner arrested by the chains or ropes of each one, and from all it met with a similar reception. Like an unwelcome guest, silently imploring hospitality, it seemed to pass from the one to the other; and when all had rejected it, I saw it drift on and on, a poor passive wanderer, to seek its rest elsewhere; nor could I wonder that, in countries where the living are treated as though they had no feeling, the dead should still less be objects of consideration.

We are obliged always to go below before the sun sets, at present, to avoid the deadly vapours which rise towards evening, from the damp ground on all sides of us, absolutely laden with agues and fevers. Two very faintly shining candles are all that are given in our common sitting-room to light us in our various occupations, and these, Kentucky draws on each side of him, while he studies a singularly incorrect and truly American road-book, so that the rest of the party are obliged to have recourse to chess and conversation. We were greatly

amused to-night by the appearance of a little Hungarian count, who had come with us from Smyrna, but whom we had not seen since we left Constantinople. I positively did not recognise him; he used to have a very sufficient supply of curly hair, and now he appeared with a silk handkerchief sentimentally twisted round what was evidently the baldest of heads. His solution of the mystery was very absurd. At Constantinople, he had gone to a Turkish barber, for the purpose of having his moustaches and whiskers arranged, but having been unable to explain altogether what he wanted, the Turk had chosen to judge for himself what was necessary, and had deliberately laid hold of him, along with two of his assistants, and had shaved his head completely, in spite of all his resistance.

CHAPTER XIII.

Scenes on Shore—Bulgarian Workmen—Natives of Galatz—Present State of Moldavia—Bulgaria—Moral Degradation—The Piedmontese Captain—Arrangements for our Comfort—Precautions taken against the American and the Musquitoes—Galatz by Night—The Voyage up the River continued—The Wilderness of Waters—Monotonous Dreariness of Landscape—The Captain's Story—The Deformed Lieutenant—Unexpected Scene of Beauty—Gradual Improvement on the Bulgarian Shore—The Floods—The Drowned Villages—Hirsova—Traces of the Balkan Campaign—Signs of Habitation—Characteristics of Turkey—The Danube asserts its Claim to Beauty—Pelicans—Buffaloes—The Turkish Supper—An Original—Night.

May 14th.

THE restrictions of the quarantine render it very difficult to obtain much personal information of any place visited under its ban, yet even then there always are little indications which give an insight into the spirit of the country. This morning, I sat some time on the deck, watching a party of Bulgarian workmen, who were clearing out a part of the harbour, and I could not help being struck by the Russian-like despotism with which the overseer drove them to and fro by means of a heavy stick. Though we hold no communication with the shore, we are quite near enough to distinguish by their distinctive peculiarities the different nations to which the persons belong who are passing to and fro. The Moldavians, actual inhabitants of the town, have a heavy, loutish appearance, which cor-

responds with what I have heard of the state of intellectual degradation of the lower classes in these provinces. They are plunged in an ignorance as sad as it is hopeless; for what can we look for, where it is the policy of those who might enlighten them, to keep them in darkness? The natives of the opposite shore, Bulgarians and Silistrians, have something almost savage in their appearance and manners; there seems more of natural intelligence in their countenances, though their moral condition is not the less one of helpless abandonment to all the rude propensities of their nature.

Indeed, from what I have been told, if we exclude those larger towns whose commercial or political connexion with other countries has rendered a certain degree of enlightenment unavoidable, Turkey is a land of moral darkness, which, it is strange as well as painful to think, should form one in the scale of European countries. The influence of such a creed as Mahomedanism on the lower orders is, and must necessarily be, most pernicious; their mind, totally uncultivated, cannot comprehend or apply the doctrines on which it is founded, whose primary basis, at least, is the same as that from which all religions, however corrupted, take their rise; whilst they avail themselves of all that licence to crime, which renders it so apt as a moral thraldom to human nature, and so powerful an agent in the spread of evil. Again, the form in which Christianity appears in this country, garbled and distorted by the superstitions and abuses of the Greek Church in Russia, is but too much calculated to produce all these fatal effects which make the truth misrepresented, often more hurtful than the falsehood openly detestable.

Our day was spent in gleaning what amusement or information we could from the proceedings of the people on shore, and in the ships around us, for although our steamer

has arrived, they have to remove all the cargo, which will prevent her sailing before night.

We went on board in the evening, somewhat anxious to examine our future abode for so many days, as we do not change again till we reach Orsova; but we have every reason to be satisfied with our accommodation, and above all with our captain, a good old man, Piedmontese by birth, whose countenance is the most prepossessing that can be imagined, and who shows already an anxiety for our comfort in every way, which is quite unexampled. The steamer is small, and of the peculiar construction best suited to stem the strong current, and follow all the windings and turnings of the river, which is the reason of the change being made here with our former vessel, more suited to the very different navigation of the Black Sea. The interior is entirely devoted to the accommodation of the passengers; my mother and I, being the only ladies, have one large room, whilst the gentlemen are expected to arrange themselves amicably in a similar apartment, which in the daytime becomes our common sitting-room. As our comfort for so long a period is of some importance, strong measures have been taken against the invasion of the musquitoes, who are beginning to appear in very ominous clouds, and it has been distinctly stipulated that Kentucky is not to sleep on the table during dinner.

We went to take a last look of Galatz before we retired, as we shall weigh anchor before daylight. If it looked already an uncomfortable habitation in the daytime, it certainly is not so less in the cold, raw twilight, with the vapour rising round the wet houses, and the darkness of the streets rendered visible here and there by the light of the lanterns, by whose aid the inhabitants were trying to steer their course through the mud.

May 15th.

We had sailed during the night, and once more stopping at Ibrail to take in goods, we then fairly commenced our progress up this vast and magnificent stream. The scene with which we found ourselves surrounded this morning after a quiet and comfortable night, was certainly as new as it was striking. We were gliding slowly through the midst of a huge track of waters, which it was scarce possible to imagine was formed only by a river, for the dreadful inundations of this winter have swollen it to such an extent, that the opposite boundary is only at times discernible; indeed, we might have imagined ourselves out at sea, but for the calm lifelessness and dull monotony of colouring which pervaded the whole of this vast extent, and was an utter contrast to the freshness of hue and ceaseless restlessness of the moon-haunted ocean. The sluggishness of the current rendered the actual movement of this leaden mass scarce perceptible; and it was only to be distinguished by the undulating rise and fall of the interminable forests of tall reeds, which clothed in unvarying sameness the low prairie lands of the Bulgarian shore, along which we were coasting.

Up to the present time a desert had been inseparably connected in my mind with a boundless plain of burning sand, a scorching sun revelling in a sky intensely pure, whose cloudlessness is painfully monotonous; but never, I think, did we receive an impression of a solitude so utter and so desolate as during the long day when we travelled on and on through this wilderness of lifeless waters, ever the same, not a sign of human habitation, not a trace of vegetation beyond the floating islands of reeds we passed at times, where numberless pelicans were stalking to and fro in search of the small fish on which they live. The sky would seem

to sympathise with this dreary region, which has, as it were, an atmosphere peculiar to itself; for although there is not a single actual cloud, the sun is altogether obscured, and a dull, leaden vapour hangs low, like a thick veil over the heavens. The stillness and the sameness of this scene, through which our steamer moved, the only living thing, was unvaried throughout the whole day. We were as completely isolated from all mankind on the broad bosom of the Danube, as on the trackless ocean, or on the boundless desert.

Happily it is not so much from the outward landscape, especially if it be unconnected with historical facts, that we are to draw the advantages to be derived from travelling, as from the new view of human life which the constant intercourse with the different nations affords, and the continual matter for thought and reflection which is almost hourly presented, in opportunities of judging by individuals of the various effects of different religions, and modes of education on the one human nature. Thus the members of our little community on board, small as it is, furnish us not only with amusement, but also with food for serious reflection.

From the character and history of our excellent old captain alone, a deep lesson is to be drawn; the extreme benevolence and goodness of his countenance, as well as his really paternal anxiety for the comfort of his passengers, had already struck us all very much. In the course of the afternoon he asked me if I would come to his little cabin, and look through his books for any thing that could amuse me. I found he had a well-stocked library of standard works in various languages, but the Bible, in his native Italian, was conspicuous on the table. He began to talk about these books, and to tell what good companions they had been to him in his solitude; then he

gradually was led on to tell me all his story, and the purity of principle, joined to a simplicity of expression, which formed in him so rare a combination, was soon accounted for.

He had had a happy fate, this good old man, after a youth filled up far too much with all the changes and vicissitudes to which a Piedmontese sailor was liable, to have had much time for reflection; he had some fifteen years ago been placed on this station as captain of a little trading vessel, before the navigation of the Danube by steamers had been established; a life more utterly solitary could not be imagined, than this had been from that period till within the last few years, when his promotion to the command of a steamer brought him in contact sometimes with passengers like ourselves. His only resource was books, and when he began to read, he began also to think. He read the Bible, and far removed from all sects, and clashing names and controversies, with none to ask him whether he were of Paul or of Apollos, he drew from it a pure, primitive, unfettered Christianity, which, though so palpably the true spirit of the Gospel, is often rarest where most a fair show is made. During the long years he has passed isolated from his fellow-creatures, breathed on by no baneful influence from a world which would instil its corruption even into things divine, hearing nothing of contending churches or human forms, he has become rooted and settled in a holy, humble, fruitful faith, which is the very essence of peace, the only source of an indestructible joy on earth.

His religion has not been untried; without family or friends, or home beyond this little room, ten feet square, in which I was seated, cut off from all human sympathy, he has never for one hour ceased to be perfectly contented and happy; his is the Christianity which colours every word and

action in life, and he has daily by his side at least one witness to his faithfulness; his crew consists of a few sailors, and one only officer as his subordinate. This lieutenant is a poor unfortunate creature who had become frightfully crippled by some accident, and whose service would always have been rejected by every one, and indeed was so, until our good captain chose him as his companion on board of his own ship, where he has kept him for years, refusing to dismiss him when his incapacity is represented by others, and continuing to pay his salary while he quietly performs all his duty himself. A smart English midshipman might perhaps feel amused at seeing a first lieutenant go about on crutches, but it was in reality a sight calculated to inspire a reverential admiration; for the delicate kindness with which the captain gave the poor cripple little easy duties to perform, that he might not perceive how perfectly useless he was, was really beautiful.

The day passed very quickly, listening to this noble old man's history. Monsieur de B——— also did not fail to vary its monotony, by flinging himself two or three times headlong down the cabin stairs, a mode of descent to which he is particularly addicted, by an "inconcevable guignon," as he himself good-humouredly says. Towards evening, we were seated below, when Monsieur Ernest, whose enthusiasm is so genuine that it is quite admissible, came flying down, exclaiming, "Come up on deck, come up quickly!" We asked what was to be seen. "Des arbres! du soleil!. de la verdure!" he shouted; and as these were all bright things, which the darkness and tempest of the Black Sea, and the mud and mist of Wallachia, had well nigh blotted from our memory, we gladly obeyed this summons, and hurried on deck. There we did indeed find that nature will not long be denied

her own most glorious privilege of beauty, which proves her so eloquently the creation of love, since, from the first moment of existence to the last, it is an exhaustless source of pure, unalloyed enjoyment, even to the poorest, most ignorant, and wretched of the children of men.

Nature never fails us; be our sorrows what they may, the sunshine will still have a smile for us, though all the world looks cold; and if earth have not a tie to which our human affections may cling, the fair aspect of the universe is still our rich possession. Nor is this free treasure of every living creature a joy less pure than it is undistructable; for while the teeming glories of earth, and air, and sea, and sky, produce on us a sense of pleasure we seek not to analyse, it does in fact proceed from the close connexion between the visible creation and the invisible Creator. His goodness shines forth in that beauty, even as in the soul restored to Him by faith; His beauty appears in goodness, the beauty of holiness; and these things prove that the good and beautiful are in some degree synonymous, since the first is, in things inanimate, the originator, or more simply the creator, of the second; in things intellectual or spiritual, the second is the outer garb or expression of the first.

This beautiful nature had called up a little Eden, out of the dark waste of waters, to gladden our eyes, so weary of fogs and mist. A lovely little island was lying on their waveless bosom, thickly wooded with fresh green trees—no longer the sombre children of the East, the dark olive, or the cypress, and the palm, but the poplar, and the dwarf oak, and the graceful willows, sweeping the waters with their long green branches; and there was grass, rich and luxuriant, and wild flowers, of whose abundance we could judge by the mingled odours they sent forth to us. Within this unex-

pected grove, every wandering bird had found a home; and, richer, fuller, more melodious than I ever before heard them, innumerable nightingales were making a sweet concert to the desert waters. The sun, just setting, not fierce and terrible, as he had risen and set for us during so many past years, but tempered to a mild radiance, had burst the heavy mists that hid him from our sight before, and sent them floating away in wreaths of vapour; whilst through this little garden of the desert he sent his long golden sunbeams, stealing down to light up the wild grace of its uncultured forest, and visit the hermit blossoms in their hidden cells.

It was one of those unexpected scenes of beauty, whose unlooked-for appearance forms the principal charm of travelling. There were men of various opinions even amongst the few who stood to gaze on it with us; and the sight suggested to the mind, how strange must be the feelings of the materialist, of him who denies the existence of the Unseen, when he suddenly comes, as in journeying over the earth he must do repeatedly, upon some wild and unknown spot like this, where the illimitable perfections of creation are all displayed, combining, in their marvellous adaptation at once to beauty and their use and purpose in the universe, to form a lovely scene, which none shall ever behold or profit by, which never has been visited by human step, or seen by human eye—trees blossoming and bearing fruit, that ripens to decay—streams fructifying the soil which winds have sown—golden sunsets, and starry nights, holding their pageants in a lifeless solitude!

And are all these things in vain? Is the perfume of the myriad flowers wasted, because it brings no grateful fragrance to the human senses; and the music of the singing birds and whispering winds, making melody together, but

lost, because we hear it not? Rather in such a scene as this, where the very spirit of life, and of life organised, is breathing forth from the desert, we have to curb the imagination, that would seek to detect the rushing of angels' wings in the passing of the breeze, and the mingling of spirit voices with the murmur of the waters; but at least we have to tremble, that ever such an impious thought was given to the world, as that one created thing, one flower, one leaf, one fleeting ray, or perfumed breath, have ever been in vain.

May 16th.

This morning we were still steering our way through a wide expanse of dull, still water; but the Bulgarian coast, along which our steamer creeps, assiduously obeying the quarantine regulations even in the heart of this wilderness, is rapidly assuming a most pleasing appearance. It is no longer a mere low swamp; but it rises in long undulating lines of grassy mounds, where there is much luxuriance of vegetation, though totally uncultivated. Of the opposite shore we see nothing. My anticipations of the magnificence of the Danube, from its great breadth and body of water, have as yet been disappointed, from the very exaggeration of these peculiarities; for instead of seeming an enormous river, whose great volume is confined within a certain limit, it is more like an insignificant lake, overflowing its boundaries. The captain, however, promises great things for it as we proceed. He tells us, that the extraordinary flood of this year has done much damage; and of this we soon had ample proof, for as we advanced, we came every now and then to some poor little village drowned outright, with only the roofs of the houses visible; huge trees torn up by the roots, drift past us, and

occasionally those, which have made a more sturdy resistance to the current, are to be seen growing out of the water.

Various signs of life gradually begin to invade our solitude of waters. We passed numerous small trading vessels, making ineffectual efforts to stem the force of the stream, on their way to the upper part of the Danube—the captain tells us they are sometimes two months engaged in toiling on, so great is the strength of the current. Our own progress is, indeed, extremely slow, even with the aid of steam; and we are always obliged to anchor early in the evening, and remain stationary till morning, on account of the dense night fogs. Early in the day a sudden bend in the river brought us, unexpectedly, before the first human habitation we had seen—the little picturesque town of Hirsova, perched on a rocky height, and embowered in trees and wild brushwood. Though prettily situated, it is now but a paltry village; the town and fort having both been destroyed by the Russians in the late Balkan campaign, of which, it would seem, we are destined to trace the disastrous effects in our course all along the river. We passed on so rapidly, that we could do no more than admire the position of this, the first inhabited place we have seen in Bulgaria: a country so new to us, and so little known, that I shall be most impatient to land whenever it is possible, in order to gain some little insight into its present condition.

After passing this village, the scene loses almost entirely its dreariness of aspect. We kept close to the shore, which was rising rapidly in height, and now began to cast a deep shadow in the water, and the banks were clothed in a long waving grass, whose refreshing verdure alone was most delightful to the eye, even without the pleasing evidence it gives of the richness of the soil, which

must render this country most productive. Every now and then we came suddenly on a little village, half hid among the trees, whose neat cottages, covered with creeping plants, reminded us often of Switzerland; though even in the least of them there was always an indication but too certain that we were still in Turkey, in the little mosque—retaining, however small and shabby, its characteristic shape and architecture.

We are more likely, I think, to come to a just estimate of the general state of European Turkey, in this our progress through the interior, than we could ever have attained to in the larger towns, where so many influences from without render it as difficult to ascertain the true moral condition of the country as it is to distinguish the colour of the water when the shadows of the drifting clouds are flitting over it. Here, in all our intercourse with the natives, we only meet with those to whom no civilisation has taught the first great lesson the world loves to inculcate, that speech is given to man to enable him to conceal his thoughts; and it is wonderful how much may be gathered of the every-day workings of their systems, both of civil and religious government, from the conversation and habits of these people, as well as from the mere outward appearance of their villages and lands.

I entered Turkey disposed to look on it most favourably in every point of view; but I fear I am likely to carry away with me a very different opinion of it, one which it is painful to entertain, but which not the less every little circumstance tends to confirm. If we rub off the flimsy gilding, with which in the more frequented quarters many atrocious systems are concealed, I think we may simply and shortly analyse the spectacle we are destined to see in this country so richly gifted by nature, as that of a despotic and corrupt government, hand in

hand with a vile creed, working on a people whose natural propensities render them singularly apt for the reception of evil.

We were obliged to drop anchor early this evening on account of a strong breeze combined with the power of the current, against which we have perpetually to struggle, and we managed to take up our station for the night in a very wilderness once more, although during the whole day we had been, at intervals, passing beneath many towns and villages. Of these, Rassova is the only one of any importance, but we stopped at none, so it was a mere passing glance. Our wilderness was, however, no longer devoid of beauty; we lay under a wooded bank with many little fairy islands around us, all covered with green bushes, whose very wildness and want of cultivation were their principal charm—the Danube, too, begins to give itself some river-like graces, now no longer appearing almost stagnant, but winding round those isolated gardens with a gentle movement and a slight murmur.

The difficulty which the traveller will always feel in divesting himself, wherever he may happen to wander, of his acquired habits and tastes—his own peculiar shade of the artificial being with which society invests us all—often produces contrasts that are extremely ludicrous, between the savage nature and the civilised man; the more so that the nature is always sublime, the man too often degraded by some frivolous amusement, or trifling luxury become a want. We felt this, in our own case this evening, as we sat on deck drinking tea and playing chess, in the midst of the pelicans and storks stalking about on the lonely islands, uttering at times a wild cry, which more than any thing I know brings most forcibly to the mind the images of solitude and desolation, whilst from the shore itself, there came

far distant a deep prolonged sound, which the captain told us was the roaring of the wild buffaloes as they galloped over the far Silistrian plains.

I went to take a survey of the Turks, whom the captain has succeeded in establishing at the other end of the vessel, in order that we may have a little space to move in our narrow prison, which their very sedentary habits would have rendered impossible had they remained on the quarter-deck. I found the whole party seated round a large bowl of pilaf, into which they were digging joyously and savagely; nodding their turbans over it, with solemn ejaculations of Mahomedan piety, and cramming it down their throats with a celerity which seemed to have no other object but a philosophical desire to ascertain how much they could swallow in a given time, without any reference to the nourishment to be derived therefrom. I wished them a good appetite, in Greek, which is a set phrase I knew they would understand; and they were all so delighted with this proof of intelligence on my part, that I narrowly escaped being choked by the great bullets of rice which they speedily rolled up in the palms of their hands, and would have jerked down my throat with singular dexterity, had I not earnestly deprecated so Oriental a proof of good will. One corpulent old gentleman who seemed to have had a superior education, sat looking at me with profound disgust, and affectedly stroked his yellow slippers whenever they even came in contact with my dress. I specially addressed him with a polite invocation for the increase of his appetite, already so voracious, that had my wish been fulfilled I doubt if any amount of food would have satisfied him; but though he gravely responded, I saw it had no effect in subduing the savageness of his feelings towards me; I was still a ghiaour

and a thing without a soul, and therefore to be despised; seeing this, I went to my father and begged a little tobacco from him with which I returned, and silently presented to him; "Mashallah," he exclaimed, this was quite another story; the soulless thing had a wonderful instinct for comprehending his precise tastes, and he instantly became the most affable and talkative of old gentlemen.

The descent of night in this desolate region, has a singular effect from the total absence of any salient object to mark its progress; the shadows seem to gather in the dull sky, there to weave a huge black veil, which is gradually lowered earthward, and becomes perceptible to us in the rapid darkening of the sea-like river.

CHAPTER XIV.

Silistria—Its Siege—Cargo of Leeches—Pasture Lands—Rutzschuk—Peculiarity of the Bulgarian Towns—Barbarian Inhabitants—Giurgevo, the Port of Bucharest—A Bulgarian Family—The Chief—The Pipe Bearer—The Young Osman—The Women—Their Invasion of the Cabin—Actual Condition of the Bulgarian People—The Passengers land—The Ruins on the Hill—The View of the Danube—A Turk sees a Supernatural Vision—Fertility of the Country—The Passengers go to walk in a Bulgarian Town—Their singular Reception—Abhorrence of Christians manifested—They are stoned—The Flight—The Town of Widden—The Invitation from the Pacha—His Doctor—The Walk with the Pacha's Guard—The Palace—The Pacha—The Intrusion of the American—The Harem—The Sultana—The Slaves—The Adoption of the Visitor as Sister—The American's Departure—The Pacha's Farewell—Produce of the Country—System of Extortion—Entrance to Servia.

May 17th.

We anchored for a short time this morning off the town of Silistria, at so very early an hour, that one only of the passengers was on deck in time to see it; from his account, it would seem that we did not lose much by our want of activity, although it is one of the principal fortresses in Turkey, and ostensibly the capital of Bulgaria. Silistria suffered so severely during the late campaign, that the town is still entirely in ruins, for it sustained a siege of eight months against a very superior force, before it was finally taken by the Russians. It is difficult to account for the tenacity with which these little Turkish towns maintained their defence against such overwhelming num-

bers so stoutly, when their feeble fortifications were very often raised only upon walls of mud.

We had taken in a considerable cargo here, which was still piled on the deck when we came up stairs, and very soon greatly excited our attention; for it consisted of an immense number of canvass bags, singularly round and well filled, and which seemed altogether not so inanimate as canvass bags in a natural state ought to be. The sailors were occupied in carefully sprinkling some cold water over each, and then tumbled them into the hold. Our curiosity was at last fairly roused to ask what they contained; when we were told that they were full of leeches, with which this marshy country supplies all Hungary, and which consequently form a staple commodity in Bulgarian traffic.

The shores of the Danube now present a never-ending succession of pasture lands, so rich, so verdant, so luxuriant, that one might almost fancy they were the reality of the Indian's dream of Paradise, where the green hunting-fields are to have no end. Early in the day, we reached the town of Rutzschuk, which is very considerable, and has a fine effect from the water. It is strongly fortified, and as it possesses a citadel of no mean importance, its position is striking. We remained only half an hour before it, but the nearer view we thus obtained was not so favourable.

The greatest peculiarity of these Bulgarian towns is the appearance of the streets, which, though in reality lined with houses, present no other aspect than a succession of dead walls, as there is not a single window, and scarcely even a door, all these dangerous outlets being arranged to open only on the private courts. This gives a strange lifelessness to the whole; but, otherwise, there is, I think, no very strong characteristic to stamp those large villages as belonging more to one

country than to another. Not so the Bulgarian inhabitants, however, whom we have now, free from the contact of any other people, in all their native rudeness. It is not, indeed, too harsh a term to apply, that of semi-barbarians, to the rude, disorderly crowd, who came rushing, shrieking, and yelling, down to the edge of the water the moment the steamer stopped.

Those steamers have not been long enough established to give time for the surprise and curiosity they excite among the natives to wear off—indeed, I believe those descending the river do not stop here at all, which renders the sight of Europeans rather a rare occurrence—but there was positively a degree of savageness in the cries and gestures of those people, though all were well clad, in the full Turkish costume. Not contented with the view they could obtain of us from the shore, some actually waded into the water; others got a great raft, of a singular construction, launched, and then, gathering on it in numbers which threatened to sink the whole concern, pushed off towards the steamer, where they seized hold of the ropes, looking in at the port-holes, grimacing, and shouting, and anathematising us. We were quite glad to escape from them, and proceed onwards, after having taken on board a few more passengers.

We passed Giurgevo, the port of Bucharest, which is on the opposite side, at too great a distance to distinguish more than a few mud hovels. This is, however, I believe, only the station, the town itself being situated several miles in the interior; but if we are to see no more Wallachian cities, we shall not certainly carry away any very brilliant impression of them. The passengers we have taken on board are a Bulgarian family, so perfectly unsophisticated, so totally ignorant of aught save the manners and customs of Rutzschuk, that they are likely to give us an admirable insight into the domestic life of this country. The party consists of

the lord and master, a frightfully ugly Turk, gorgeously dressed, with one of the most intelligent countenances I ever saw, but stamped at the same time with an expression essentially bad. He is singularly talkative and inquisitive, and though well versed in all the Oriental tongues, can speak none whatever which may be said to appertain to Europe; yet in the course of a very short time he had made us all understand perfectly that he is a great astronomer, who devotes his whole life to the solution of the most obstruse problems. Of these learned tastes he soon gave further proof, by the unwearied interest with which he examined the quadrant, only equalled by the still more eager and profound contemplation which he bestowed on the unveiled Europeans.

It is extraordinary how well a Turk will always play his part, in never seeming surprised at any thing, however new to him. I am quite sure this man had never been on board of a steamer before, and yet he marched about, as if he were intimately acquainted with the whole matter. This was not the case with his pipe-bearer, who is as complete a savage as it is possible to conceive. His countenance was quite similar to the drawings I have seen of the North American Indians, the amount of whose intellect is said to be almost on a level with the instinct of beasts; he could not keep his footing on deck at all, but went tumbling about, uttering a wild howl whenever any new object met his eye; at last, as he wandered to and fro, he came suddenly upon the great engine in full movement, when he seemed to think he had hit upon the gate of Gehenna itself, for he uttered the most frightful yell, and rolled back heels over head. In presence of his master, he is mute and motionless as a statue, and his whole capacity seems centred in the care of the pipe.

The rest of the family is composed of some six or

eight females, a large proportion of babies, and one hopeful young gentleman, of six or seven years of age, named Osman, who is the delight of his father's eyes, as he emphatically explained to us, and threatens to be the veriest torment to all the rest of the party.

I was sitting alone in the cabin, when it was suddenly invaded by the whole tribe of women, who had found their way down stairs, in a state of the wildest excitement at the novelty of every thing round them. They shrieked with delight, and gesticulated in a most uncouth manner, when they found this new field for their curiosity, and at once proceeded to a most violent examination of all the objects, animate and inanimate, which the room contained; they scattered every thing about, tried on every article of dress which they could find, and then, snatching the pencil out of my hand with which I was drawing, absolutely shouted with glee, when they found they could themselves produce marks upon the paper. As may be supposed, the babies were far from silent during this onset; and Osman, in his researches into European manners and customs, became so unruly, as to inspire me with considerable fears for the utter destruction of every thing we possessed.

At last, I ventured some timid expostulation, and mutely made them understand, that "I humbly gave them leave to depart;" but at once flinging down whatever they held in their hands, they rushed towards me, testified their friendship in the most warm manner, and then, seating themselves close to me, with a firm, grasp of my hands, demonstrated, expressively, that they would be happy always to live with me; while Osman, trying to drink out of the ink-glass, and finding the contents not pleasing to his taste, flung the whole out of the window In this emergency, the good captain came to my assistance.

As soon as he saw the women had invaded our territory, he had expected what would follow, and had prepared a cabin for them on deck, whither he now conducted them, in spite of their sulky looks and angry anathemas.

How comes it that this people are left in a state bordering on barbarism, in Europe itself, whilst we in England, France, and elsewhere, are basking in the free and unobstructed light of the gospel, and drawing, from our very infancy, on the vast store houses of learning which the labours of accumulated ages have combined to fill, for all those lessons of wisdom, which most ennoble humanity; taxing the profoundest and most wonderful sources of science even for our needless luxuries, or the stupendous inventions of men's art and ingenuity to spare half an hour of our superfluous time. Whilst we are thus refining, as it were, on our very refinements, here is, hard by, a nation of barbarians, of whom, taking them in the most favourable view, the whole of the female part of the population live and die, without one thought beyond the mere daily supply of their animal wants; live—albeit each one has a soul immortal as our own—in total ignorance that there is such a thing as religion, except in the practical bearing of the Moslem system, so called, on themselves, inasmuch as they are slaves, and die, going down to the dust, like the very beasts that perish!

That there mustbe vast inequalities in the moral aspect of this world, is the law of its creator, which the mind recognises almost as soon as the eye can discern the rise and fall of mountains and valleys on its visible surface; but surely we should deem it somewhat churlish of the luxuriant and wooded hills to gather together in their own bosom all the fresh streams that spring amongst them, nor ever let them flow downwards to fertilise the barren and sterile plains beneath! Yet are there certain rivers of living waters,

which gush in rich abundance over our favoured countries, whose course has never yet been turned towards this parched and thirsty land!

Every hour that we now advance up the river clothes its banks in a richer verdure, and more varied vegetation; or rather, I should say, its bank for the Wallachian shore is still scarce discernible. In the course of the afternoon we reached a pretty little village, whose gardens and houses lay clustered at the foot of a low green hill.

The captain, who, for reasons of his own apparently, had until now prohibited any attempt to land, now offered the passengers leave to go on shore for half an hour; recommending them, at the same time, to avoid the town, and to make for the ruins of an old castle, visible on the summit of the hill, and from which we were likely to have a fine view.

The proposition was hailed with all the delight which a fortnight's imprisonment on board was calculated to produce, somewhat damped, however, by the wild appearance of the crowds, who were rapidly collecting on the spot where we must land; indeed, their frantic demonstrations of excitement, when we got into the boat to push on shore, deterred some of our party from attempting the excursion. It was with considerable difficulty that we made our way through the assembled villagers, whose gestures and cries were most expressive of the hatred and contempt with which they regarded us. Happily the steamer and its contents engaged them so much, that we succeeded in getting clear of the village altogether, by a circuitous road, which was particularly like a road anywhere else, and ascended to the summit of the hill. The ruins were merely those of an old Turkish castle no way remarkable, but as soon as we disengaged ourselves from them, and got out on the open brow of the hill, the view which then burst upon our sight was most admirable.

Here was indeed the Danube at last, which till then, seen in detail, and most unfavourably, in its swollen and irregular state, we had never comprehended as the great, the stupendous, the noble river which it is. Springing in the very heart of that Europe, of which it is the great artery, and sweeping along with its silver rolling waters, too vast and majestic to be turbulent, undiminished in volume, unvarying in course from land to land, till now, where we could distinguish it far off in the vast plains that lay around us—it came, turning its mighty stream through the green meadows which it fertilized, and rushing deep and wide, as though it had gathered all the rivers of earth to its bosom, beneath our feet, rolled on away to that wild and stormy sea, whose tremendous billows cannot, even for twenty miles, resist its current. The country, of which we obtained a panoramic view from this spot, was but one succession of fertile plains, but the river was still in flood, and the distance rendered the details of the opposite shore quite indistinct.

The charms of this scene were enhanced by all the sublimity which a tremendous thunder-storm, that had gathered in the sky, and was just about to burst, could throw around it. Just over the river there hung an immense cloud, as black as night, which cast within its broad bosom a shadow intensely dark; whilst far beyond the influence of the storm, in the wide extent that was revealed to our gaze, we could see it winding in the sunshine, like a line of liquid light, and every now and then, within the range of the tempest, a gush of forked lightning would dart from the thick gloom, and rebound in vivid flashes on the black waters.

We were so engaged in contemplation of this scene, that it was some time before we observed the flag hoisted on board as a recall signal, and at the same moment I could perceive some of my own friends on the deck, making very

earnest signs to me to return quickly. Seeing this, and without waiting for my companions, who still lingered, I began to run down as fast as I could, taking the most direct road, which led me through a street, that was however perfectly empty. The descent was steep, and I was going at a very rapid pace, when suddenly a little door in the wall which enclosed the lane was opened, and an old Turk made his appearance.

Now it is to be supposed that this good native had never seen a European in his life before, and independent of the difference in dress and appearance, as it is a physical impossibility for a Turkish woman to run, or move out of her wonted shuffling gait, the speed at which I was advancing towards him must have seemed most miraculous; certain it is, that at the apparition of this flying figure he started back with a look of terror I have never seen equalled, and tearing his turban down over his eyes, in a most frantic manner, almost drove in the door again, in his anxiety to get out of reach of my baneful glance before I passed him. I very greatly enjoyed the idea of having frightened a Turk; and when I told the adventure to my friends on board, the captain said he had most certainly imagined me to be a supernatural being, probably a ghoul, or other fiend in a marvellous human shape.

The thunder-storm broke over our heads just as Kentucky had guessed that he would go on shore and take a walk, since we had all returned in safety; but so far from there being any possibility of landing, the violence of the gusts raised a goodly host of such very waves on our great river, that we were forced to lie under the shelter of a bank till it should have passed; the torrents of rain which fell were quite tremendous, and had a strange effect in bringing an untimely night over the earth, for the darkness, while it lasted, was intense; and when the bourasque passed, almost as suddenly

as it came, the sun, though just about to set, burst forth in renewed splendour; and whilst the whole earth brightened and revived, that fresh sweet scent exhaled, which a rapid shower always calls up; the whole race of singing-birds seemed to pour out their melody in honour of a new day, though an hour barely remained to them of twilight.

May 18th.

Every day, almost every hour, now adds to the charm of our course along the river. There is doubtless a good deal of sameness in the scene; but to us, long used to look on burning plains, the very greenness and luxuriance of these grass-grown, flowery banks, was a source of unwearied delight. From what we can see in thus skirting along the shore, this country must be singularly rich and fertile. We do not perceive much evidence of cultivation, but the generous soil seems scarcely to require it. And we now constantly pass great herds of cattle, luxuriating in the inexhaustible pastures; the pretty little villages, more or less distant, have altogether replaced our pelican-peopled islands; and the traces of those disastrous inundations, though still visible, are rapidly diminishing. The Bulgarian astronomer continues to familiarize himself in his own manner with each individual of the party: his desire of gaining information is only equalled by his wish to display that which he already possesses; and his character is really an interesting study to those who love to watch how the same propensities of the common human nature develop themselves under different forms, according to the moral influences which have been brought to bear upon them, in the education and national habits.

I found him and Monsieur Ernest to-day seated upon two camp-stools, and busily employed in solving a mathematical problem: both were very earnest and ex-

cited; and the only difference between them was, that the whole of the entire Turk was marvellously poised upon the stool, whilst the little Frenchman's feet more naturally sought the ground. The Turk has altogether prohibited the appearance of any of the women on deck; but Osman has still the free range of the vessel, greatly to the annoyance of the whole party. My little niece and he have had much private skirmishing; but lately he seems to have attached himself principally to the Hungarian count, whose shaved head has seemingly for him a peculiar attraction.

Towards evening, we came in sight of a village, or rather town, considerably larger than those we have been passing of late. It had several mosques, from whose minarets the call to prayers, for us now like the voice of an old friend, was even then sounding; and it looked altogether so pretty and inviting, that when we found we were to remain here an hour, to take in provisions, we very earnestly demanded permission not only to go on shore, but to penetrate into the town, and explore its strange recesses. The captain said we might certainly land, to make the experiment; but he must warn us that we would be probably almost the first Europeans these people had ever seen, as it is not a steam-boat station, and he had stopped here by mere accident; and he needed not to tell us, that a hatred of infidels is one of the lessons which Mahomedanism most firmly impresses on the lowest of its followers, till it becomes almost a principle of their nature, unless tempered and softened by a continual contact with them, as at Constantinople, or Smyrna; still, he thought we might very safely take a quiet walk; and accordingly, a few of the passengers landed, and began to penetrate into the town.

We were received with a tremendous shout by the crowd on the shore, which Monsieur de B——— and his nephew

somehow interpreted into an expression of good-will, and taking off their hats to the ground, they bowed in return in the most polite and Parisian manner. Certain Turkish words, however, met my ear, much calculated to give me a different idea of their feelings towards us; but passing from amongst them, as best we might, we went on into the town.

It was really very pretty and peculiar with its high walls, over which the vines were hanging down to the very street, and the houses, with their long terraces, where the most extraordinary groups were collecting to gaze at us. All the women, thickly veiled as they were, fled at our approach with loud screams; but the whole population of men, on the contrary, followed and crowded round us, gathering in numbers as we went along; they were for the most part handsomely dressed in the oriental costume, and all except the mere rabble were armed. Even the most obtuse amongst us soon became aware that our presence had singularly roused these Mahomedans from the indolent composure which is so much their national character; and accustomed as we were to the silent contempt and disgust with which they invariably look on a Christian, we could not but perceive that there was something much beyond that passive dislike in the threatening looks with which they scowled on us. There was positive hatred and fury.

This was confirmed to me at last, by the insulting epithets which they now loudly lavished on us, and which I understood but too well—"Ghiaours," "Dogs of Christians," and the most violent anathemas against our unfortunate ancestors for I know not how many generations back. The alarm with which these proofs of their growing fury inspired me, soon communicated itself to my companions, for the enraged glances of these zealous Mussulmen were not to be mistaken.

By tacit consent we would have turned to retrace our steps, but this movement produced at once an announcement of the utter abhorrence in which they held us in a language we might all understand, which was by a volley of stones.

This was decidedly becoming serious, and we had no resource but in a speedy flight. Our enemies thronged in the street by which we had come, we therefore turned into a bye path which led down to the river, and made the best of our way toward the bank, at a pace which happily soon distanced them, embarrassed with their loose slippers, and perhaps their own unwieldy persons; still it would seem that their detestation of us made them unusually active, for when we reached the shore they were close upon us. "Courrez, mon oncle," shouted Monsieur Ernest, who was dreadfully frightened as Monsieur de B—— gave some symptoms of lagging behind. "Je cours," responded he, panting, and just then, by an "inconcevable guignon" he hit his head against a tree, and fell rolling harmlessly to some distance down the grassy bank. "Nous faisons toujours du chemin!" exclaimed Monsieur Ernest, as he picked him up, and the couple tore on with an energy which, terrified as I was, struck me most ludicrously. The captain, who had been on the watch, suspected that something of this kind had occurred, and sent a boat to our rescue; which, making the best of our way through the thick brushwood and tangled grass (no easy matter), we reached at last in safety, although just as I leapt into it, a well-aimed stone hit me on the shoulder, which had it struck my head, would have left me a lasting proof of the pious zeal of these sons of the prophet.

This adventure, dangerous as it might have been, terminated in being the source of great merriment amongst us all; but not the less, it could not fail to raise many painful reflec-

tions in our minds. It is in towns such as these, where no artificial taste has yet been introduced, where there has been no blending of foreign customs or ideas with the crude nature of the people, that their real character and intellectual advancement are to be duly appreciated.

The malignant hatred with which we had inspired those for whom hospitality to strangers is a virtue and a duty, merely because we bore the name of Christians, showed a tenacity of prejudice, a rooted and determined bigotry, which proved how firmly seated is their religion of gross and degrading doctrines even amongst the most ignorant. Nor can I express with how much bitterness of feeling our minds reverted to the dissension and variance which in more favoured countries, are even now tearing asunder the Church of Christ.

Here we should have been too happy could we have found but one who would not have thought he did God's service in insulting or even putting to death a follower of our Lord ;—there, where the shame and the opprobrium were rather on the head of him who should fail not only to bear the name, but to act and live as a true servant of the Crucified, how do they, in their very excess of light, unwittingly yet virtually deny Him who said by this they should be known as His disciples if they loved one another! and stumbling at a word, a shadow, an untangible distinction, instead of turning their eyes, which He has opened, to the benighted lands, how do they rise up to break in sunder the bonds of love among themselves, till Christian wars with Christian, priest with priest, and ransomed soul with ransomed soul!

We could not but think how the vain shadows, in which so many people in our own country disquiet themselves in vain, would speedily take their due importance in their eyes, could they go forth, as we had done, and walk in the lands where they would be hated for His name's sake.

May 19th.

I awoke this morning at five o'clock, and was told that we were in the harbour of Widdin, one of the principal and most populous towns in Bulgaria, the seat of government of a large pachalik, and almost immediately after, I received a message from the captain to beg I would come on deck as quickly as I could to act as interpreter.

I was not long in obeying the summons, and found the passengers and officers of the steamer, surrounding a man whom I at once distinguished to be a Greek, though he wore the Turkish costume, and who was vainly endeavouring to make himself understood, with a few words of wretched Italian, by a party, who, except ourselves, consisted solely of French and Hungarians. He was greatly relieved when I addressed him in Romaic, and he at once explained the purport of his visit. His highness Eiredeen Pasha, whose doctor he was, had sent him to request that we would go and visit him, as he had very seldom an opportunity of seeing Franks, and particularly ladies. He had desired the doctor to use his utmost eloquence in securing our consent, and had sent several soldiers of his own guard to conduct us in safety to the palace. Our captain, who seemed greatly to dread offending the pasha, declared that he could not refuse, and that the visit would be highly interesting; assuring me at the same time, that the presence of the formidable looking guard, would amply secure us from any annoyance. It was, therefore, decided that we were to go; but when I prepared to follow the doctor on shore, I found that our adventures of the preceding evening had so far cooled the ardour of most of the travellers, that no one seemed disposed to accompany me, except Monsieur de B——, and Monsieur Ernest.

It was a large and really picturesque town, the streets

broad and handsome, lined with the open stalls where the Turks habitually transact business, and many of them covered in, so as to render it agreeable to walk through them even in the heat of the day.

As we passed along, preceded and surrounded by the soldiers, we were struck with the terror which they seemed to inspire among the people, who, so far from showing any disposition to injure us, scarcely even dared to raise their eyes. The doctor, who had been absent many years from Greece, was delighted to have an opportunity of talking his own language, and gave me much information as we proceeded: he told me that the pasha was exceedingly rich and powerful, and had many thousand subjects. The late Sultan Mahmoud, had given him his own adopted daughter in marriage, and my new acquaintance promised to endeavour to obtain permission for me to visit the harem, but this, he said, was a favour rarely granted to any one, and would depend entirely on the pasha being favourably disposed towards us.

He then asked me, why the other passengers had not accepted the invitation; and when I mentioned the cause of their fears, he instantly begged I would describe the principal actors in the assault, and give the name of the village, "For," he said, "the pasha will have them all punished instantly; he is anxious to encourage strangers to come here." Now, I knew that in Turkey, punishment invariably means decapitation, and I could not help thinking that such summary vengeance, taken on a whole population, would by no means tend to produce an encouraging effect on the minds of the travellers he wished to conciliate. I communicated his proposition to Monsieur de B——, and Monsieur Ernest, who, furious as they had been at the treatment they had received, were by no means disposed to have the insult washed out in blood. We therefore extorted a promise

from the doctor, that he would say nothing on the subject, and very soon found ourselves at the gate of the palace. It was a dwelling by no means unworthy of a prince, and covering a large space of ground. We passed through a handsome gateway, guarded by sentinels, and entered an immense court, almost entirely filled with soldiers. The building itself was low, and very irregular, consisting principally of a succession of long galleries and terraces; but there was also an endless number of rooms, each destined to a separate purpose, which the doctor named to us as we passed through them—the waiting-room, the audience-chamber, the room where the courts of justice were held, and so on; and in all of these, motley groups were to be seen, of just such persons as in more civilised parts of the world invariably crowd round the dwellings of the great. The pasha's own dependants seemed very numerous, and several of them now officiously led the way to the room where we were to wait his Highness.

The furniture consisted solely of a long, low divan, amply supplied with cushions, and several baskets filled with the rarest flowers. The doctor, and several others who followed us in, took off their slippers on entering the apartment, and then ranged themselves round it, their hands crossed on their bosom. During the interval of delay which followed, we remained in great admiration of the view from the windows, which was most striking:—the strange oriental town, composed of the most fantastic buildings, and half hid by fine old trees, lying smiling in the sunshine, on the banks of the noble river. Suddenly a great movement was manifest in the outer room, and the doctor, with somewhat of trepidation, announced the pasha. Two or three soldiers entered, and took their station at the door, and his Highness almost instantly appeared, leaning on two Turks. He was

a tall, good-looking man, with piercing dark eyes, and a grave, stern expression of countenance; he wore the tight-fitting, braided surtout, and the red cap or fez; drawn down over his strongly marked eyebrows, and his peaked black beard fell almost to his waist, where a magnificent sword was secured by a leathern belt. He possessed a dignity of manner which was really quite imposing. Coming forward, without speaking, he took my hand, and requested me to sit on the divan beside him, and then, turning to the doctor, directed him to introduce my two companions, and ordered stools to be brought, that they might sit opposite to him. We were amused to see that the poor doctor, formerly gay and talkative, had suddenly subsided into the most humble and submissive of beings. He acted as interpreter—for his Highness spoke nothing but Turkish; and some minutes were spent in going through the usual compliments with all due formality.

Pipes were then brought in by two negro slaves, and one, splendidly inlaid with jewels, was offered to me. I was tolerably well acquainted with the ceremonious usages which are "de rigueur" in an Eastern visit, and I therefore, to the utter astonishment of my French friends, composedly took it, and saluted the pasha with all the solemnity I could muster. It is only strict politeness to repeat this salutation, which is performed by placing the hand on the heart, the lips, and the forehead, every time that any thing is offered; and the pasha and I were therefore to be seen constantly bowing with great gravity, while coffee and sweetmeats were being handed round. The intense solemnity of our proceeding, however, met with a most ludicrous interruption.

Kentucky had been left placidly asleep on the table in the saloon when we left the steamer, and very great,

therefore, was our amazement, when, unasked and unannounced, he made his appearance at the door, pushing his way through the guard, and marching up to the pasha, his hat on his head and his cane in his hand, just as he would have walked along the streets of Boston. The intruder stared at his Highness for a few minutes with imperturbable coolness, and then turning to me (for he could speak nothing but English) he ejaculated, "I calculate he never saw an American afore." The horror of my two companions (whose French politeness was most thoroughly shocked), the consternation of the doctor, and the indignation of the pasha, at this want of respect, were most amusing; the latter fixed his flashing eyes on the unfortunate Kentucky with a look which evidently made him uneasy, and I hastened to excuse his sudden appearance the best way I could.

The doctor now told me, that the pasha had consented to my visiting the harem, and he proposed conducting me thither at once, if I felt so disposed. I was delighted with the prospect of inspecting an establishment which must be so very characteristic, so perfectly Eastern; for the doctor told me, that no other stranger had ever been admitted to the apartments of the sultana, who was, of course, a very great personage in their estimation; whereas, at Constantinople, so many travellers habitually visit the harems that they are half Europeanised. My two companions did not, however, look much pleased at the idea of being left in solemn conference with the pasha, which, in the absence of the doctor and myself, must be reduced to the mute language of the eyes; nor did they seem to derive much consolation from my assurance, that the further proceedings of Kentucky would probably afford them some excitement.

But it was impossible they should accompany us, and we therefore left them seated beside the American, with whom they could hold no communication, and directly opposite to the pasha, who stared fixedly at them with the most imperturbable dignity. I followed my companion through several long corridors, putting to flight various negroes and other slaves who seemed to think it was as much as their head was worth to look at me. The doctor told me that on account of her high rank the sultana reigned singly in the harem as the pasha's only wife, but that there were a number of odalisques, one of whom could speak Greek, and would interpret for me. We crossed an open court, with a fountain playing in the centre of it, and entered what seemed to be a separate building. Here the doctor stopped, not even passing the threshold, and told me he could go no further, and that two negroes who now presented themselves were to be my guides.

I did not half like being left alone in this strange-looking place, and would have remonstrated against his leaving me, but he looked perfectly terrified when I proposed it, and disappeared the moment the door was opened. The two slaves walked before me in silence, their eyes bent on the ground, through several passages, till we reached the foot of a stair, where they in their turn consigned me to two women who were waiting for me. One of these was the interpreter, a remarkably pretty woman, though immensely fat; and the other was, without exception the most hideous old woman I ever beheld, whom I rightly guessed to be the duenna of the harem. They received me with the highest delight and as though I were conferring a great honour upon them, fervently kissing my hands and the hem of my dress, in return for which I could only wish that they might live a thousand years and never

see a "bad hour." Seizing me by the hands, they dragged me in triumph up the stairs, and through several rooms to the audience chamber of her Highness the Sultana. Like that of the pasha, it was furnished with a long divan, over which were spread two of the most splendid cashmere shawls I ever saw; several cushions were ranged on the floor, and the windows were all hermetically closed by the fatal screens of which we had heard so much. They are a sort of wooden lattice, but the open spaces are so very small that one can scarcely discern any thing without.

The women made me sit down; and when I placed myself in the usual European manner, they begged me in a deprecating tone not to remain in that constrained position, but to put myself quite at my ease as if I were in my own house. How far I was at my ease, installed *à la Turque*, on an immense pile of cushions, I leave to be imagined by any one who ever tried to remain five minutes in that posture. The interpreter now left me alone with the old woman, who crouched down on a cushion at my feet, and with the help of a few words of Turkish, with which I was acquainted, she managed to give me quite as much information as I wished for, on the domestic life of Eiredeen pasha's large family.

We were interrupted by the arrival of some fifteen or sixteen young slaves, who came running into the room, laughing and talking like a party of school girls, each one pausing at the door to make me the usual salutation, and then clustering together in groups to gaze at me with the most eager interest. They all wore the same dress, and certainly it looked on them most singularly graceful, as they stood in a sort of languishing indolent attitude, with their arms folded and their long almond-shaped eyes half closed. It consisted of a loose silk jacket, reaching to the waist,

another underneath of a different colour falling below the knee, and finally, a pair of enormously wide trousers either wholly red or a mixture of gay colours, which almost covered their little yellow slippers. A silk handkerchief and various other ornaments were twisted in their hair with quite as much genuine coquetry as is to be found in more civilised countries. Of all the number only three struck me as having any great claim to beauty; but certainly creatures more lovely than they were could nowhere have been seen. Two of them were Circassians, with long fair hair and soft brown eyes; the other, was, I think, a Georgian—very dark, with beautiful features, and the most haughty expression of countenance. It was evident that she was held in great respect as the mother of a fine little boy, whom she had in her arms. All of them had their nails dyed with that odious henna, with which they disfigure their hands and feet.

Presently there was a strange shuffling noise heard without, a prodigious rustling of silk and satin, and the interpreter hurrying in, announced the sultana. The slaves fell back, and ranged themselves in order. I rose up, and her Highness entered, preceded by two negro boys, and followed by half-a-dozen women. She was a tall, dignified-looking person, of some five-and-thirty, and far from handsome. Nothing could be more splendid than her dress, or more perfectly ungraceful. She wore a pair of light blue silk trousers, so excessively large and wide, that it was with the greatest difficulty she could walk; over these, a narrow robe, of red cashmere, covered with gold embroidery, with a border of flowers, also worked in gold, at least six inches wide. This garment was about five yards long, and open at the two sides as far as the knee, so that it swept on the ground in all directions. Her waist was bound by a cashmere scarf, of great

value; and from her shoulders hung an ample pelisse, of brown satin, lined with the most beautiful zibelline fur. Her head-dress was a silk handkerchief, embroidered with gold; and to complete her costume, she was literally covered with diamonds.

She received me in the most amiable manner, though with great stateliness and dignity; and when I begged the interpreter to tell her Highness how greatly I felt the honour she had done me, in inviting me to visit her, her features relaxed into a smile, and dragging herself and her load of finery to the divan, she placed herself upon it, and desired me to sit beside her. I obeyed, and had then to recommence all the compliments and salutations I had gone through at the pasha's, with still greater energy; for I could see plainly that both herself and her slaves, who stood in a semicircle round us, were very tenacious of her dignity, and that they watched most critically every movement I made.

I was determined, therefore, to omit nothing that should give them a high idea of my "savoir vivre," according to their own notions, and began by once more gravely accepting a pipe. At the pasha's, I had managed merely to hold it in my hand, occasionally touching it with my lips, without really using it; but I soon saw that, with some twenty pairs of eyes fixed jealously upon me, I must smoke here—positively and actually smoke—or be considered a violator of all the laws of good breeding. The tobacco was so mild and fragrant, that the penance was not so great as might have been expected; but I could scarcely help laughing at the ludicrous position I was placed in, seated in state on a large square cushion, smoking a long pipe, the other end of which was supported by a kneeling slave, and bowing solemnly to the sultana between almost every whiff.

Coffee, sweetmeats, and sherbet (the most delightful of all pleasant draughts), were brought to me in constant succession by the two little negroes, and a pretty young girl, whose duty it was to present me the richly embroidered napkin, the corner of which I was expected to make use of as it lay on her shoulder, as she knelt before me. These refreshments were offered to me in beautiful crystal vases, little gold cups, and silver trays, of which, for my misfortune, they seemed to possess a large supply, as I was obliged to go through a never-ending course of dainties, in order that they might have an opportunity of displaying them all.

One arduous duty I felt it was quite necessary I should perform, and this was, to bestow as much admiration on the sultana's dress as I knew she would expect me to feel; I therefore exhausted all my eloquence in praise of it, to which she listened with a pleased smile, and then, to my surprise, rose up and left the room. I was afraid I had offended her; but a few minutes after she returned, in a new costume, equally splendid and unbecoming, and I once more had to express my enthusiasm and delight, which seemed greatly to gratify her. She then returned the compliment, by minutely inspecting my own dress; and the slaves, forgetting all ceremony in their curiosity, crowded eagerly round me.

My bonnet sadly puzzled them; and when, to please them, I took it off, they were most dreadfully scandalized, to see me with my hair uncovered, and could scarcely believe that I was not ashamed to sit all day without a veil or handkerchief; they could not conceive, either, why I should wear gloves, unless it were to hide the want of henna, with which they offered to supply me. They then proceeded to ask me the most extraordinary questions—many of which I really found it hard to answer. My whole existence was

as incomprehensible to this poor princess, vegetating from day to day within her four walls, as that of a bird in the air must be to a mole burrowing in the earth. Her life consisted, as she told me, of sleeping, eating, dressing, and bathing. She never walked further than from one room to another; and I can answer for her not having an idea beyond the narrow limits of her prison. It is a strange and most unnatural state to which these poor women are brought; nor do I wonder that the Turks, whose own detestable egotism alone causes it, should declare that they have no souls.

Her highness now sent for her children to show them to me, which proved that I was rapidly advancing in her good graces: and, as I luckily knew well that I must not look at them without pronouncing the wish that they might live for ever, in case I should have an evil eye, she was well-disposed to receive all my praises of them, and to allow me to caress them. She had four fine little children, and the eldest of them, a boy of six years old, was so perfect a miniature of his father, that it was quite ludicrous. He was dressed exactly in the same way, wearing even a little sword; and he came in bowing with so precisely the same dignified manner, that I really should as soon have thought of offering *bons-bons* to the pasha himself, as to the imposing little personage.

My attention to the children quite won the heart of the sultana, and she desired the interpreter to tell me that we were henceforth to be "sisters;" and I was obliged to receive this addition to my family connexions with becoming delight; she also wished me to be informed that she had once seen a Christian at Constantinople, and that she was not at all like me. I thought this very likely; but I was growing very anxious to terminate my visit, which had lasted, with its

interminable ceremonies, nearly two hours. The sultana was very unwilling to let me go; but when I insisted, for I thought the patience of my companions must be quite exhausted, she once more rose and left the room; in a few minutes the interpreter returned, and kneeling down, kissed my hand, and then passed a most beautiful diamond ring on my finger, which she said the sultana begged me to keep, though it was quite unworthy of her "sister." I was much shocked at the idea of taking it, for it was a ring of very great value; and though I ought to have known that in Turkey it was an insult to refuse a present, I could not help remonstrating.

The sultana came in herself to bid me farewell, and I endeavoured to return it to her, but she frowned in a way which really frightened me, and commanded the slave to tell me that doubtless it was not good enough for me, and that since I wished for something better, a more valuable present should be found. This settled the question, of course, and I put on the ring, and went to take leave. She had seated herself, and received my parting compliment in great state; her last speech was to beg that I would tell the people of England always to recollect that if they came to Widden, it would suffice that they were my countrymen to ensure their having a friend in Eiredeen pasha. I then touched her hand, and passed out of the room without turning my back to her, whilst the slaves kissed my hands again and again.

To me one of the most painful feelings which assailed me during my visit, was in witnessing the fawning servility with which these poor creatures treated their mistress—it is an atrocious system altogether. The same negroes waited to conduct me to the spot where I had left the doctor, and where I found him waiting for me, holding in his hand a string of amber beads, which

he insisted on my accepting, and I no longer dared to refuse any present. Just as I thought, my two friends had been for some time very uneasy at my long absence; and heartily tired of staring silently at the unmoved pasha, the American had started up about five minutes after I left the room, and coolly walked off, without even bowing to the pasha, who sent after him a look which led my friends for a moment to expect to see the head alone roll back through the door where the entire man had disappeared.

We immediately took our leave, as it was nearly time for the steamer to sail; and on arriving on board I had only time to send back a few brooches and jewels by our friend, the doctor, in order that the remembrance of her adopted English sister may live a little longer in the recollection of the Sultana of Widden. For my part, I shall not soon forget the singular insight I thus gained into the private life of so many responsible and reasonable beings, who live from year to year as degraded prisoners, and neither ask nor wish for freedom, honour, or justice.

After we had got under weigh, the captain came for me in great haste, to say that we were just going to pass under the windows of the palace, and that the pasha had come out to salute us once more; he seemed to consider this as a great honour done to us by his highness, and a strong proof of the great favour in which we were held by him. As soon as we came in sight, he appeared on a terrace which overhung the river, surrounded by his whole suite, and waved his farewell to us in the most gracious manner. The captain insisted on my standing up beside him on the paddle-box, that my respectful return to his salutation might be quite conspicuous, and from thence I could well distinguish the prison windows of my royal sister's apartment, though all seemed very mute and lifeless within.

The exterior of the town of Widden is remarkably pleasing; it is one of the few fortressess which escaped falling into the hands of Russia, and lies seemingly thriving and populous in the midst of rich and cultivated plains, whilst far off we can distinguish the range of the Balkan mountains, with their mantle of snow. We found it difficult to reconcile the extreme fertility and luxuriant produce of the beautiful country through which we passed during all this day, with the miserable appearance of the human habitations and their inhabitants. The immense herds of valuable cattle alone, would seem to indicate a natural source of wealth which ought to have told upon the whole population; but the Hungarian count so far explained the matter by telling us that in these countries the proprietor claims, as he expressed it, a "wolf's" share of all the produce, so that the poor serf and his family may often struggle with the most abject penury in the very midst of the fatness of the land.

We passed this evening the mouth of the little stream Timok, which divides Bulgaria from Servia; and the opposite shore is now at last beginning to rise out of the water, with a somewhat more imposing aspect. Notwithstanding some slight difficulty in the navigation of this portion of the river, on account of the sandbanks and numerous little islands, not the less pretty that they are so dangerous, the captain intends to push on all night, as it is full moon, and he is anxious to secure our reaching Orsova to-morrow.

CHAPTER XV.

Rapids of the Danube—Landscape—New Mode of Conveyance—The Boat towed by Peasants—Magnificent Scene—Vegetation in Servia—The Iron Gate—The Walk on Shore—Singular Mode of crossing a River—Kentucky's mysterious Disappearance—The Guardiano's Despair at his Loss—His fruitless Search—New Orsova——Kentucky restored by a Bulgarian Peasant—His Adventures—Orsova—The Baths of Mehadia—Austrian Annoyances—The Town and its Inhabitants—The Pass of the Danube—Extraordinary Grandeur of this Defile—Saint George and the Dragon—Posthumous Animosity of that Monster to Man—Hungarian Gentlemen—Their Patriotism—A Game at Chess with a Turk—The Bulgarian Ladies see a Waiter—Their Domestic Life—Belgrade—Semlin—The Gipsy Town—The Frontier Districts of Hungary.

May 20th.

THE captain fulfilled his intention of proceeding as rapidly as he could through the night, and this morning a very different scene met our eyes from what we had been used to of late. We had reached the limit beyond which no steamer can pass, in consequence of the tremendous and dangerous rapids of the Danube, which have rendered the navigation of this river a matter of such extreme difficulty. They have now succeeded in rendering the whole course from Vienna to the Black Sea practicable for steamers, excepting a distance of about ten miles, which we were to pass to-day. There had been, and I believe still is, some idea of cutting a canal along the Servian bank of the river; and various other projects are

in agitation for overcoming the very serious obstacles presented by the extreme violence of the current, and the terrific rocks that rise menacing out of the bed of the river in many places.

The captain told us that these rapids or cataracts, as he named them, are more or less practicable, according to the extent of the river's inundations. When it is in high flood, its waters are raised so much above the level of these frightful hills of stone, which choke up the channel, that even small steamers have at such times been borne over them by the strong eddies in safety. The present state of the river, though not altogether so favourable as this, would, he hoped, render the passage comparatively easy to us. Tedious it must necessarily be; but the landscape with which we were already surrounded, was so very magnificent, that we were delighted to have the prospect of examining at our leisure all the beauties, which, the captain assured us, were to increase on us as we advanced.

But already, where we lay, the Danube assuredly claimed our tribute of unbounded admiration, as the most noble and majestic river that ever rolled its sweeping waters through a lovely country. Its banks are now sufficiently close to bring the whole body of water under the eye at once, whilst they are yet so distant as to make its breadth and volume seem quite stupendous; and these banks themselves, no longer deserving such a name, are very hills, imposing in height as they are graceful in form, and so richly clad in variegated wood, that it is scarcely possible to believe no cultivation has helped to render them so green and beautiful.

A huge flat-bottomed boat was in waiting to convey us on; one end of which was covered in, and arranged with seats for the passengers, while the rest was filled up

with luggage. A long rope was attached to it, which several men, in two smaller boats, guided to the shore; and there, somewhat to our astonishment, as we had not been aware that this was the customary mode of proceeding, it was taken up by some twenty or thirty Bulgarian peasants, by whose exertions alone we were to be dragged on to Orsova. At six in the morning we took leave of our steamer, to establish ourselves in this new conveyance, Monsieur de B—— handing us all in, and then tumbling in head-foremost himself. The captain took his seat at the bow, with a slight degree of anxiety visible on his placid countenance—for it is not very long since the passage of these same rapids was considered most perilous.

Our progress was, of course, as slow as can well be imagined, for the boat was very heavy, and the men who drew us, now clambering over the rocks and stones, on the wild rough edge of the river, now wading up to the knees in water, could only proceed at a very moderate pace. We had not been long enough in the country of slaves to feel at all reconciled to seeing our own fellow-creatures harnessed, as it were, in a sort of team, that they might drag us along, who were seated there in comfort; the more so, that their exertions were sometimes painfully great when we came amongst these foaming eddies, where the current, curling round some hidden rock, formed a sort of a little whirlpool. Still, revolting as it was to see human labour substituted for that of animals, we could not but admit that the captain was right, when he said that there was no other alternative, and pointed out to us, how impossible it would have been to have guided horses or cattle, with safety, over the rugged shore.

A heavy rain drove us under cover, for an hour or more, when, as we were some dozen individuals, in a

space six-feet square, the door of which had been closed to keep out the rain, and keeping out the light also, it was not to be denied that Kentucky's proposal that we should all go to sleep, was quite reasonable. At length, after a considerable time, the sun broke out with a renewed vigour, and the captain, opening the door, told us we might all come out and go on shore, if we liked to perform part of our journey on foot, by walking alongside of the boat. The invitation was hailed with such delight, that he had scarce done speaking before we had all left our narrow prison, and were standing by the water-side.

Then, as we looked round, we stood motionless with delight, for we were surrounded by a scene of enchantment, such as I have nowhere, in all my wanderings, seen equalled. How did the Rhine, the Rhone, the little sparkling Neckar sink, in comparison of this glorious Danube! There it rushed, no longer dull and lifeless and sea-like, but a very river, only the most stupendous and majestic that can be imagined, foaming, leaping, bounding along, writhing its glittering waves round the terrible rocks that rose from its bosom, and swelling up on the marvellous hills that girt it on either side; marvellous they were, for the exuberance of their unequalled, though uncultured vegetation, cannot be described. Of the opposite side, we could only see that it was green, and lovely, and most richly clad; but on the Servian shore, where we stood, and feasted our eyes with the details, we might well be enraptured with the scene.

We stood on a green lawn, where the short, soft grass, looked as though it had been cut daily by some careful hand; and so thickly was it strewn with the sweetest wild flowers, that no English garden ever freighted the winds with a heavier load of perfume. So profuse and inexhaustible were indeed all the pro-

ductions of nature in this beautiful solitude, that she seemed to have lavished all her powers in embellishing it, and revelling in the wild beauty she produced, till every inch of ground was bursting with life and vegetation. From the summit of the high hills that rose behind us, down to the very edge of the water, the forests of young wood contended with the luxuriant shrubberies, and close over the river, the laburnums and wild yellow roses hung in graceful festoons, till their very blossoms were shed into the wave.

Then, as we proceeded to walk on over the rocks, and through the thick brushwood, the innumerable birds that burst from every bush, and scarce seemed startled at our approach, showed how rarely a human foot invaded their green haunts. At times we would catch a glimpse of a deer bounding through the thicket, and they tell us that these woods are full of wild boars and bears, as well as game of every description. The sun continued to shine brightly, and we walked for an hour or more amongst this beautiful scenery—the buzzing of a thousand insects in the warm air, the singing of the birds, the innumerable odours from the hill, all seeming to indicate that this was the very domain of a living summer.

At last the captain begged we would return to the boat, as we were about to pass the formidable "Iron Gate," so much talked of. This name has been given by the Turks to an enormous ridge of rocks, filling up almost entirely the bed of the river for about two thousand yards, over which the Danube rushes like a cataract, its waters torn into a thousand whirlpools and frothing eddies, by the sharp points of the rugged and countless masses of stone, which impede its progress. A very narrow and shallow passage is the only channel, and when the water is low, it is not only frightfully dan-

gerous, but impracticable. None but the most experienced boatmen attempt to pass it, and the shipwrecks are but too numerous. Happily for us, however, the floods were so high, as almost entirely to hide this tremendous mass from our sight; and we passed over it in perfect safety, though at the expense of the most violent exertions, and with a slight feeling of dread that we should be sucked in by the swift whirlpool that foamed past us. After we had passed this formidable spot the captain was quite at ease, and told us we should certainly be at Orsova in a very few hours; meanwhile, he gave us leave to land once more, in order that we might walk across a sort of little peninsula, whilst he carried the boat round it, all the easier that it was lightened of its load.

No objection was made to another ramble through this fairy land, and we set off under the direction of our quarantine guardiano, who has become superabundantly careful of us all as we approach the place where he is to deliver up his charge. Our Danube twists and winds itself so much among the hills here, that we often lose sight of it altogether; and, at last, in the course of our walk, we came up to a small river, flowing rapidly down from the hills, to join the parent stream. It was of considerable breadth, though not very deep, and we paused, wondering if we were intended to cross it, as the boats were out of sight, when the guardiano came bustling up, accompanied by some ten or twelve stout Bulgarian peasants, who stood ready, and instantly, to my great amusement, I saw Monsieur de B—— and my father slowly traversing the stream, in the most majestic manner, hoisted on the shoulders of two stalwart peasants, clad in sheep-skins.

I thought the pair to whom the imperative guardiano consigned myself, looked very fierce and savage, but strange to

say, they lifted me in their arms as gently as possible, and carried me across with the greatest care, endeavouring to prevent a single drop of spray from wetting my dress. There is no doubt that the untaught politeness of a savage is far more perfect and genuine, than that which is the result of habit, and *usage du monde.*

Another half-hour's walk brought us to the point where the captain and his boat were waiting us. He told us that we might now establish ourselves comfortably, as we should not disembark again till we reached Orsova. Just as we were all ready to start, and the guardiano was settling his yellow band with a self-satisfied air at having brought back his flock in safety, a sudden exclamation from the captain startled us all—"Dove l' Americano?"—we looked round, and became instantly aware that Kentucky was indeed nowhere to be seen. The whole party rose in great excitement.

We looked in the boat, and out of the boat, on the shore, and on the hill, but not a trace of our lost American was visible. Where had he last been seen? was now the question. He had last been seen on the edge of the water, calculating that the Danube was nothing in comparison of the Ohio; but this gave us no clue to the mystery of his disappearance. The boatmen shouted, and hailed him again and again without success. The guardiano became like a man out of his senses at last, for a list of the passengers had already been sent on to Orsova, and it was necessary that he should be able to present each individual of the party at the Lazaretto in *propria personâ.* Provided his full number were forthcoming, I do not think he much cared whether the persons were dead or alive, and he would have been quite contented if he could have found the complete corpse of Kentucky anywhere; but even this was denied him, for although he and the boatmen jumped on

shore, and ran shouting in all directions, nothing but echoes, without the slightest American accent, responded to their appeal.

The captain, who was well aware that a delay which would bring night upon us among these rapids, would endanger the safety of the whole party, at last called the boatmen to their posts, and imperatively requested the guardiano, who was looking under the bushes and up to the tops of the trees, to re-embark and resume his seat—he unwillingly obeyed, and the captain then turning round to the passengers, announced with a sort of quiet sigh of resignation, "Abbiam perduto l' Americano!" It was an incontrovertible fact, against which there was no remedy; and, though we were really all much distressed at poor Kentucky's unaccountable disappearance, we had no alternative but to try and divert our attention by contemplating the scenery around us. It still continued to be most surpassingly beautiful.

The hills now appeared to rise in height, and great mountains were to be seen behind them, while the fantastic winding of the river brought new points of view before us at every turn, each one seeming more charming than the last. The captain pointed out to us the spot where the little river, the Bagna, disgorging itself into the Danube, separates Wallachia from Austria, but we could scarce think we had entered on so civilised a part of the world; when very soon after we came in sight of the little Turkish fortress of New Orsova, which, in the very peculiarities that render it so picturesque, is thoroughly Oriental, for it rises with all the light elegance of that peculiar architecture from amongst cypresses and poplar trees; and as we passed beneath it, we could distinguish many a turbaned head looking down at us, probably a portion of the suite of the pasha, who resides there. The fortress is

in a very neglected and ruined state, to be the abode of so high a dignitary; but the view which he commands from his dwelling may well compensate for all other deficiencies, if he be a man of any taste.

We had passed this pretty little fort, and were toiling on to Orsova, though it was not yet in sight, when a low howl was heard in the hill above us. We all began to conjecture what it was, and had finally determined that it was the cry of a buffalo, when the captain starting up, exclaimed, "Sara l' Americano!" The guardiano clasped his hands theatrically, the boat was stopped, and a few minutes after, tearing down through the bushes—his head bare, his dress torn, and his hands and face frightfully scratched—poor Kentucky was seen to approach; and, bounding in amongst us, he threw himself into the captain's arms, half sobbing with delight. The history of his adventure was simply, that, his calculations respecting the right path having been altogether erroneous, he had completely lost his way, and having, as it would appear, in his attempts to rectify his mistake, set off in the direct road for Widden, he had been met by one of the peasants who had carried us over the river, and who had turned him back, and now restored him to us in safety.

A mile or two more of heavy labour at the drag-rope, and our poor Bulgarians, perhaps not more exhausted bodily than we were mentally tired of our toilsome progress, accomplished their task, and drew us fairly to the quay at Orsova. There is a certain little town, named Varenna, lying on the brink of the Lake of Como, and looking down coquettishly on its own fair image reflected in that pure mirror, which used to be my beau ideal of a quiet retreat, for one wearied of the world and its follies; but as soon as I had seen this little, romantic, smiling Orsova, I aban-

doned my former favourite, feeling that nowhere else had I seen a spot at once so bright and peaceful. It is assuredly a very lovely place.

The town is not in itself at all remarkable, except perhaps for its cleanliness and neatness, so new to us now; but its position is highly picturesque. It lies just in a wide curve of the river, so that from the stillness of the water it would rather seem to be situated on the borders of a lake; and it is cradled in by great hills, still as wooded, still as fertile, which rise round it in a semicircle; while the fields in its more immediate neighbourhood are so green and full of flowers, that it appears almost to be placed in a large garden. The Hungarian count told me that the surrounding country is most singularly beautiful, especially near the baths of Mehadia.

According to his account, this place—the medicinal qualities of whose mineral waters are really famous—has become quite a fashionable watering-place; and deep-buried in the heart of the wild green mountains as it is, has not escaped the contamination of cities. It is now continually the resort of persons of that class, whose amusements are vices, and whose life is dissipation. For this reason, though more rural and solitary, Orsova would be a very preferable residence; but it is rarely visited. No sooner had our boat's keel glided on the shore, than a guard of Austrian soldiers marched up, and closed around us, like so many prisoners. They were in waiting to carry us to the lazaretto; and our worthy old captain, who could go with us no further, took leave of us here, with many expressions of friendship and regard.

The lazaretto was a mile out of town, at least, but carriages were in waiting to carry us thither. They were drawn by great, wild-looking, Hungarian horses, who bore us off with a speed which considerably annoyed the pertina-

cious soldiers, who, although it was quite impossible we should escape them, persisted in keeping up with us the whole way. The road was admirable; and our course lay through a series of fields, shaded by lofty trees, which gave it somewhat the appearance of an English park. We soon reached the lazaretto; quite sufficiently dull and dreary to make us very thankful that our quarantine had expired, so that we need not anticipate a tedious sojourn within its narrow limits.

We were not so free as we thought, however, and they soon proved to us we were in punctilious Austria once more; for we were told that we must wait there till both the Custom-house and Health officers arrived from town, which might be be some time, as they were at dinner. It was just possible that we might have liked very well to have been at dinner also, as we had breakfasted at sunrise; but our sulky-looking guard certainly cared little for the state of our appetite; and as there were no chairs to sit down upon, they advised us to walk to and fro in a narrow passage, whilst they leant against the wall, smoking. After an hour or so, this species of exercise, in a dark corridor, became quite intolerable; and the French gentlemen particularly complained so much, that the head of the party at last said the ladies might be liberated and go on to the hotel, but that the gentlemen must positively remain till all the luggage was examined, whenever that might be.

The ladies were so thankful to exchange the damp close air, and treadmill promenade of the lazaretto, for the warm sunshine and rapid motion of the carriage along the smooth road, that I fear they did not sufficiently compassionate the unfortunate companions whom they left behind. This little town has perhaps not a single building that is really handsome; and yet the streets are

so wide and clean, and the houses, each with their little garden, so very neat, that it has quite a pretty effect. The inhabitants seem principally Wallachian, and are consequently not at all attractive in appearance; their natural ugliness being heightened by the frightful fur cap they wear, and the huge bear-skins dragged so ungracefully round them. There was a sprinkling of Turks and Hungarians, which somewhat enlivened the scene, and various languages seemed equally prevalent among them.

I imagine that all business is transacted with the aid of the German tongue, as this only was used in all our quarantine ceremonies; but in the streets, both Turkish and Lyric are resounding on all sides. We established ourselves in a very good hotel, far more clean and comfortable than we could have expected, where the whole establishment were Austrians; and having ordered dinner to be quite ready when the gentlemen should arrive, we went out on the balcony to amuse ourselves with all the strange sights of this half-civilised place.

The very first object which presented itself to our eyes, was hailed with a delight which those only could understand who had been so long deprived of such a sight. Directly before us stood a great church, a Christian church, with its cross, and its arched window, and its pictured saint, and the little church-yard round it, all full of the graves of Christians. There must be, I should think, a great diversity of religions in such a place as Orsova; but, at all events, due reverence is paid to the Christian minister, for as we sat there, a good old priest, with his shovel hat and gold-headed stick, a sight we had not seen for years, came slowly down the street, and every one as he passed, except a few Turks, rose up and uncovered their heads, with a respect it was pleasing to witness.

Hour after hour passed away, and we still remained there alone, with no better occupation than to watch the heavy carts drawn by cattle toiling up the street, and guided by the wild cries of their Hungarian drivers. Still the gentlemen did not appear, until at last, after we had supposed all sorts of extraordinary accidents, and tormented ourselves as much as we could, about ten o'clock a great vehicle, something like a baggage-cart, came lumbering down the street, containing all our unhappy companions, pale and haggard with rage and hunger.

They had been detained the whole of this time on every possible pretence. Their luggage had been opened, their property seized, and their tempers tried, in short, in every imaginable manner. Much abuse was bestowed by them on Austrians in general, and custom-house officers in particular. Monsieur Ernest especially, was in a great rage; they had seized half his possessions, for he was carrying home a number of Turkish curiosities for his young wife in Paris; but what principally rendered him furious, was the seizure of his books, as being of a suspicious nature. He declared that they consisted of a road-book, a map, and a book of prayers, and that if they were restored to him at Vienna, as was promised, he would put a label on them, stating them to be dangerous books for the safety of the Austrian empire!

It became dark very suddenly, and we were once more regaled with a thunder-storm of great violence; though shut into our little parlour, we could only hear it resounding loudly among the numerous hills, whose echoes prolonged and gave back again and again the deep rolling notes of that solemn music.

May 21st.

We were all astir at an early hour this morning to go

on board of our new steamer, and very cheerful and sunny did Orsova look in the morning light; and very tempting, indeed, seemed those lofty mountains and deep valleys above and around, whose recesses we would fain have explored, but the boat which takes us as far as Semlin lay there already, and by seven o'clock we were rapidly moving away.

We found the deck of this new conveyance crowded with all sorts of passengers, in addition to the quiet party who had accompanied us so long. The two Germans only had left us to go by land to Pesth, which is, I believe, a most agreeable and interesting journey, but, at the same time, I would not advise any one to be tempted, by whatever inducement, to abandon the river at this point, for the whole length of the Danube offers nothing to be compared to the magnificence of the scenes through which we passed to-day, and I do not indeed believe, that, anywhere, a more splendid spectacle of river scenery is to be found than in this most majestic pass. Certainly, the Rhine must sink into utter insignificance before it, and I am much astonished that its numerous visitors and admirers have not long since abandoned it for this formidable rival, so much more worthy of their raptures. I am sure when its high claims to attention are more generally known, it will be thronged with travellers.

For some little time after leaving Orsova, this great river continued to display a considerable expanse of still, quiet water, but the huge mountains seemed rapidly to close in all around, and very soon they rose up directly before us, so lofty, so inaccessible, that we could not understand how we were about to penetrate into the very heart of them. It seemed to us as though we were advancing straight on the menacing rocks of an insurmountable precipice, but a sudden turn brought us through a narrow entrance, which, as we

swept round, again seemed to close behind us, and left us within a vast defile of such surpassing grandeur, that I am certain nothing anywhere can equal it.

It has the appearance as though this tremendous stream had at some period burst the control of its former banks, and hewn a new channel for itself in the rocky breast of the mountains, by the very weight and power of its waters; for here, on either side, rose the most stupendous cliffs, almost perpendicular, and towering majestically up, till they seemed almost to meet far above over our heads, whilst the river—so lately two or even three miles broad, now confined to a space of about two hundred feet, but with a consequent depth of water of some hundred and seventy, it is said—came rolling, thundering and foaming, down between them, with the most terrific force, the whole of its vast volume in a very convulsion, as it twined its glittering length, serpentlike, round these mighty rocks, and licked their rugged sides with its clouds of froth.

There was something really awful in this scene. The deep roaring of the waters, as grand as it was terrible—the lofty height of the inaccessible precipices, and the rapidity with which, twisting and turning, every instant presented some new feature in the sublime landscape—certainly render it a most singularly imposing sight. Close to the entrance of the pass, on the bare face of the rock, there is a huge Latin inscription, surrounded by sculptured figures, which is known by the name of "Trajan's table." It is said to be in honour of him, and of the construction by the Romans of the wonderful road which passed beneath it. I think the new road on the opposite side, which has been but lately completed, is equally deserving of such a commemoration, for it is at once a most useful work, and a very arduous undertaking.

It was with no small difficulty that our steamer could

stem the extraordinary strength of the current which sweeps so vehemently through this immense gorge. The greatest promptitude and care were necessary in the management of the vessel, as it was sent reeling from side to side, to avoid the innumerable Scyllas and Charybdis of this defile; in the very narrowest part of it, there is a huge rock, named, I think, "Kazan," which rises abruptly out of the midst of these boiling waves, and forms a whirlpool of no inconsiderable violence.

We could discern several caverns on the face of the cliff as we passed, but they were half hid by the long drooping branches of young wood which hung down over these rugged precipices, and added not a little to the wild charm of their savage beauty. This narrow defile is not very long, but even after we left far behind us what is more properly termed the jaws of the pass, the same scenes of stupendous grandeur continued to present themselves, exhibiting a succession of the most varied and wildly beautiful pictures of river scenery.

Throughout the whole of that day did we toil on through the white frothing waves of this tumultuous river, with those two lofty mountains on either side—so bold, so steep—hanging over the water in huge masses of rock, or bending back from it in a shelving precipice—and still, however rugged, however wild, these tremendous cliffs were ever clothed in that luxuriant verdure, to which our eyes might well now be accustomed, so lavish has nature been to this magnificent Danube. Sometimes, as though the capricious stream would seek to appear before us, in every possible point of view, we rounded a promontory, or took a sharp turn, and found ourselves gliding into a little seeming lake, most still and quiet, with some smiling village half hid among the trees, or a romantic old ruin perched on a rock, reflected un-

marred by wave or ripple within it. But this never lasted long, and soon the wild current would break up the mirror into a thousand whirling eddies, and the deafening roar, a moment lulled, would lift up its voice again louder than ever.

Most unfortunately for our entire enjoyment of these grand scenes, towards the afternoon we were assailed by a storm of rain so extremely violent, that at last even the most pertinacious was driven below; for not only were the decks flooded altogether, but the drifting torrents which the wind swept in gusts across the face of the cliff, altogether hid the landscape from us, and at times only the clouds opened to show us some frowning rock, or the sweeping outline of a hill.

It was very tantalising to catch only an indistinct glimpse of the picturesque old castle of Golumboz, which tradition has rendered so interesting, by assigning it as the prison of the good Empress Helena; but I own I was still more disappointed not to have seen the cavern bearing the same name, for therein it is reported that St. George did actually kill the Dragon; and what is still better, that the swarms of musquitoes which infest the river have been produced by his corrupting carcass. I had never heard this story before, and I was really delighted to find, in addition to its other charms, that the Danube was able thus to bring me into absolute contact with that famous dragon, beloved of childhood, and I felt that I should bear the stings of these horrible insects with a much better grace, when considering them as the posthumous attempts of that unamiable monster still to persecute the human race.

This weather continued all day, and indeed brought on the darkness prematurely. As it was impossible to stay on the deck, we had no other resource but to collect together in the saloon, which, though large and com-

fortable, was scarce adequate for our numbers. We had no ladies as yet at all; but a great many Austrian officers going down to Pesth, and Hungarian gentlemen walking majestically to and fro, in boots and spurs, with their fur cloaks thrown with considerable grace over their shoulders.

There was a good deal of promiscuous conversation amongst the passengers, chiefly in German; and as Monsieur de B—— and Monsieur Ernest were no great proficients in that language, two of the Hungarians courteously addressed them in Latin, speaking it, of course, with the most perfect fluency, and with an elegance of pronunciation which seemed to me greatly superior to the manner in which it is spoken in Italy, where I have occasionally heard it. These gentlemen told us that this noble language is not now much used in Hungary, at least in a pure, unadulterated form, for all the dialects of the surrounding countries, Servian, Lyric, and Wallachian, are more or less strongly imbued with it—Hungarian and German are chiefly employed. It was quite refreshing to hear them speak of their native land, so enthusiastic is the love they bear to it.

It is only in such countries as Hungary, Greece, Spain, &c., where the national pride or the national poverty has so far kept them aloof from all, and enabled them, as yet, to escape somewhat the sort of magnetic influence which is drawing the European nations together now, that this freshness of ardent patriotism is to be found, this almost childlike belief in the universal superiority of their own land. Elsewhere, we now find French the universal language; and well-bred persons, of whatever country, so much the same in dress, manners, and appearance, that but for the physical characteristics, we might hesitate to classify them; and although the innate *amor patriæ* is rarely altogether extinct, they generally

rather prefer adopting the customs and habits of foreigners. We were much amused at the dignified manner in which the father of Osman, who it seems is going on a mission to Belgrade, had installed himself on a sofa at the top of the room, allowing no one to approach him but the pipe-bearer. This poor wild Bulgarian is becoming more and more bewildered with all he sees and hears. I made him to-day quite happy by giving him a little box of gilt wafers to which he had taken a prodigious fancy, but he has evidently not the most distant idea what they are intended for, and seems to intend adorning himself with them in some ingenious manner.

In the evening when candles were brought in, Monsieur Ernest proposed to me to play at chess, and we were just sitting down, when the haughty Turk, who seemed rather tired of his solitary grandeur on the state canopy, from which he had driven all others by his surly looks, suddenly shuffled down, and coming towards us, very coolly set Monsieur Ernest aside, and intimated that he himself would do me the honour to play with me. There was something rather comical in the idea of playing chess with a Turk, and although the technical terms of that game in the Turkish language had certainly formed no part of my education, I thought with the help of a few of the wonted exclamations it might be managed, so we sat down with all due solemnity. His head with the turban and long beard certainly did look uncommonly fierce over the chess-board, but we found no difficulty as to the science of the game; for the word "check," or "echec," seemed to have been converted into Turkish as "chok," and the king he called pasha; and as he was a first-rate player, he beat me in about ten moves, repeating "chok pasha" pertinaciously till he check-mated me outright.

We had abandoned the ladies' cabin to his family, for there is a greater deficiency even in a reasonable degree of refinement in the Bulgarian women, than I have witnessed among the natives of any other country, and it was really impossible to remain with them. We had secured a little private cabin on deck which was clean and comfortable, but the torrents of unceasing rain fell with such vehemence throughout the night that we were threatened with a regular inundation, and this, combined with the wild roaring of the waters, rendered sleep nearly impossible.

May 22nd.

The deluge, for such it really may be called, has not abated in the least; and they had actually to lay planks three or four feet deep on the deck, before we could reach the stair in order to go down to the saloon. We are very fortunate in having passed that part of the Danube, which is so singularly beautiful, and well worthy of a journey for itself alone, before this hurricane overtook us. By what we could distinguish from the little windows of our prison the scenery is still very fine.

We are passing between Hungary and Servia, with the Carpathian mountains in full view, and the river, amply wide enough indeed, but not so much so as to detract from its grand and imposing effect as formerly, has now settled into a more steady and majestic flow, like the swelling tide of a man's strong passions subsiding from the convulsions and wild energy of his youth to that deeper, stiller current which bears him on in manhood, more concentrated, but stronger withal. We occasionally catch glimpses of ruins and Turkish forts on the rocky hills, still richly wooded, which rise on either side of us; but nothing of any interest presents itself till we reach Belgrade. It is there we are to lose our Bulga-

rian family; and Osman made his appearance this morning dressed out in the most splendid manner, actually covered with jewels, and armed with a long sword, which the little monster wields as if he had positively an incipient taste for cutting off heads.

We were much startled in the course of the morning by the most terrific screams, which were suddenly heard to issue from the cabin, and made us all fly to the rescue under the belief that the Bulgarian ladies had somehow sustained some frightful injury; but we found that the whole disturbance had been produced by the entrance of a waiter amongst them when they were all unveiled, and when he was questioned as to the cause of his intrusion, the origin of this tremendous uproar proved to have been rather amusing.

They had turned the cock which let off the water, and had seemingly been much amused at seeing it flow in consequence, so much so that they let it run till it had positively flooded the whole cabin, and the streams of water passing under the door had shown the waiter in the passage what was going on. He called, shouted, and remonstrated in vain from the outside, and finally in despair had burst in upon them to rectify their imprudence.

I paid these poor women a visit this morning, and I was much struck, amidst all the untutored savageness of their nature, with the refinement of tenderness which they displayed towards their children; but this is indeed the only channel in which all the deepest and purest feelings of human nature can flow for them; they are prisoners and slaves, debarred from society, from knowledge, almost from the light and air; they know nothing of the world without, and this is the only one of earth's kindly ties from which they are not altogether cut off; from their parents they are generally separated young, their brothers they never know, their

sisters are sent to another harem. Occupations they have none beyond the dyeing of their nails, and the painting of their eyebrows; and the excitement attendant on the difficulty of making the fierce black lines meet precisely at the proper place is, I presume, their greatest amusement.

It is, therefore, in the exercise of their maternal affections alone that they can lavish all that has been given in all lands to a woman's heart, of devotedness and energetic love. The care and sympathy for others, which form her chief enjoyment of life, and those powers of endurance which make her, weak by nature, yet so strong when called upon to suffer for another, would be all vain and useless for the harem slave, were it not for the poor little helpless being, who, clinging unconscious to her breast, prevents the blessed well of tenderness within from closing altogether.

With this Bulgarian family, we take our final leave of Turkey, for we cannot land at Belgrade, still so thoroughly an Oriental town though certainly the last, as it would renew our quarantine. The rain had, most fortunately, somewhat abated before we reached this very interesting place, and we were able to come on deck to see it, when about two o'clock, we passed beneath its walls on our way to Semlin.

The fine old fortress of Belgrade is altogether less imposing in appearance than we had anticipated, from the stirring historic associations connected with it, and the vast importance which its position, on the very borders of Christendom gave it formerly in the eyes both of Infidels and Christians. When we recollected how often it had changed masters, and how often these old walls had stood an obstinate siege, it seemed to us to bear very few traces of all the wild and bloody scenes of which it had been the theatre; its situation is, however, peculiarly striking. It stands just on the junction of these two noble rivers—the

Danube and the Save; from whose mingled waters, forming around it a wide and sweeping circle, the grey rock on which it stands rises up proudly, all rugged and inaccessible, whilst the fortress and town themselves, which are in every respect most thoroughly Turkish, present a strange contrast, with their mosques, and minarets, and cypress trees, to that of Semlin, just opposite, which is equally distinctly stamped with the usual characteristics of a mere Austrian town.

Indeed nothing can be more singular than the close approximation of these two cities, so completely the Turk and the Christian seem to look defiance to each other across the Save, which alone separates them, a distance of about two miles. Belgrade has for some time past been made over to Servia, of which it was formerly considered the capital, till the seat of government was changed by the Prince Molosch, and Servia declared an independent state, although she pays her annual tribute to Turkey. But in these diplomatic days, the colour of the flag waving on the ramparts does not always indicate what power is in actual fact established there. The more we see of these countries, the less doubtful seems to us the ultimate fate of all those provinces—Wallachia, Moldavia, Servia, &c. St. George's devouring dragon has surely very metaphorically come to life again in the shape of the Russian empire.

We did not see the town, as it lies behind the fortress, but some of the Hungarians told us it is dull and mean looking, and doubtless very Oriental, as far as want of comfort and cleanliness are concerned. We passed the tower where criminals were strangled, formerly, and thrown into the water—which was also quite Turkish—as a convenient way of getting rid of them, and then we passed on to Semlin.

We landed almost immediately, as we were to change steamers here, and would have but little time to walk. We might have fancied ourselves in Wallachia again, when we got on shore, for the mud was ancle deep, and the only houses we saw, for some little way, were poor-looking huts, constructed of the same material.

This proved, however, to be, what is termed the gipsy town, as it was originally built for, and altogether peopled by, that wandering race. Many of them still seem to inhabit it, for we met several, principally young girls, with all the peculiar features of the Zingara not to be mistaken. The Hungarian gipsies are a peculiarly interesting portion of this widely-disseminated family; we had an opportunity, this evening, of ascertaining them to be highly poetical, and picturesque in appearance; and I am told they retain, more than most of their brethren of other nations, the use of charms, and study of astrology, and all those delightfully picturesque practices which are so attractive in them, because they really seem to be the lingering traces of the old Egyptian mysteries.

Passing through this part of the town, which is called the Zigankaberg, we then entered into a number of very long, very straight, formal streets, with ranges of neat houses, and here and there a plain white-washed church. They were dull and empty, and we saw few inhabitants beyond the innumerable Austrian officers, who were everywhere to be seen, sauntering about, smoking cigars in a very civilised, uninteresting manner. The whole of these frontier districts of Hungary are, I believe, under a species of military government of a peculiar nature, originally established to keep off the inroads of the Turks; and since continued, both as a check on behalf of Austria alone, to the smuggling trade, which might be so easily carried on

here, and also as a kind of *cordon sanitaire* to the whole of Europe, when the plague declares itself in the East. This accounts for the numbers of military stations we see everywhere; and the still greater amount of uniforms, which, since we left Orsova, have superseded, almost entirely, all other costumes.

We ascended to a ruined castle, on the summit of a little green, rocky hill, and sat for some time enjoying the extensive view which it commanded. The town on which we looked down, had a pleasing appearance, with its various gardens and trees, from this point. It lies on a promontory, between the Danube and the Save—but decidedly the finest object in the whole landscape is its rival, Belgrade, which is highly picturesque when seen from this distance. Semlin has the reputation of being a remarkably unhealthy spot, and we were fully disposed to believe this, when, as the twilight deepened, the densest vapours I ever beheld arose up from the river, and soon enveloped every thing in a heavy damp mist. The prudent members of our party insisted on our all returning on board, to go below, when we saw this; but indeed there was so little to be seen at Semlin, that we could raise no great objection. It is totally devoid of any thing characteristic.

CHAPTER XVI.

Change in the Character of the Scenery—The Gibralter of the Danube—Hungarian Ladies, contrasted with those of Bulgaria—The Friend of the Hoff-Meisterin of Pesth—Consequences of Monsieur Ernest having gained a Prize at College for the German Language—Illok—Bad Weather—A Singular Character—History of the Poetess of Pesth—The Jesuits—Wretched Night Accommodation—Egotism of the Friend of the Hoff-Meisterin—Retribution which befalls her—Towns of Hungary—Pesth and Offen—The Interior of the Town of Pesth—Offen—The Palace—Meeting with the Hoff-Meisterin—Interior of the Palace—Monsieur Ernest's Conversation with the Swiss—The Blocksberg—Pesth by Night—Buda-Pesth at Sunrise—The Record of the Danube—Vissegrade—Gran—Circumstances of the Duke of Reichstadt's Death—Hungarian Politicians—Concert of Hungarian Peasants—Pressburg—The Emperor's Vow.

May 23rd.

We started at daybreak, thankful to escape from the dark, unwholesome atmosphere of this place, which must certainly be very pernicious, for we have actually inhaled the poisonous vapours which seem to breathe from the river ever since the sunset last night. We had until now fancied the Danube somewhat unjustly calumniated with respect to the musquitoes, which were said to be so serious a drawback to this voyage; as yet we had seen very few; but now they are becoming seriously tormenting, though certainly not sufficiently so to forego on that account this very beautiful journey, as I know many people have done in their dread of them. We have also taken on board an

immense number of passengers going to the fair of Pesth, which, rather unfortunately for us, is this week, as the steamer affords but little accommodation, and will now be much crowded all the way to Vienna.

This increase of company, however, promises to afford us much opportunity for study of character, both national and particular, and we stand in need of some amusement of this nature within the vessel, for we are told that we have little to expect from the scenery without, as far as Pesth at least. It certainly has altogether lost its charm. We have left the hills far behind us, and have entered on a flat, uninteresting stretch of lowlands, where the inundations are once more visible, and the river has become quite smooth. We passed several towns, but none were particularly worthy of attention, till we reached Petterwardein, a large and important fortress, which has been termed the Gibraltar of the Danube, an appellation which I think it certainly does not deserve, for the rock on which it is built, though sufficiently lofty and steep, and very extensive, is not by any means the elevation which would justify such a comparison.

There is a pretty little modern town named Neusatz, directly opposite, with which it is connected by a long bridge of boats, and it is strange that this is the first bridge we have seen on the Danube, though we have followed its course already so many days. After passing Petterwardein, we were surprised to find ourselves entering once more on a very solitary region, totally without interest, as we seemed to be traversing a vast plain clothed with interminable forests, and it was but rarely that we saw a village or a human habitation. At times we would meet a great raft laden with timber, drifting down with the current, and the Hungarian peasants who guided them looked both wild and fierce, with their dark faces, long beards and moustaches, in

sheep-skin cloaks. The uncertain weather drove us below very often; but, happily, these Danube steamers are extremely comfortable for the day-time. It is only their deficiencies in night accommodation which it must be owned are rather trying.

The Hungarian ladies, with their fresh complexions, fair hair, and stiff, formal manner, form a strange contrast to our last companions. We are certainly penetrating rapidly into the European world now; but, as far as the ladies are concerned, I am not sure that we have ascended so much in the scale of civilisation as might have been expected; for, whilst the last we had to deal with painted their eye-brows, and had no occupation of any sort, these present paint their cheeks, and have no other employment but the gradual augmentation of a small straight piece of knitting, destined to no possible use that I can conceive, and which is most marvellously always the same in shape and dimensions, though the various knitters never met before.

Those with whom I have conversed, are quite as patriotic as the gentlemen, but it is a very narrow-minded and savage kind of patriotism, having a firm basis in much obstinate ignorance. They seem to me to look on England and France as mere distant provinces, of which Paris and London are the county towns; and one lady with whom I had been laboriously conversing in German, which I speak so badly as to feel very proud of having achieved a conversation at all, asked me if I could speak Hungarian, and when I answered in the negative, exclaimed, contemptuously, "What a wretched education you must have had!" It would be very unfair, however, to judge of the women of Hungary by these around us now, for they are evidently merely farmers' and merchants' wives, who never even go to Pesth, except for the annual fair.

On every potent, grave, and reverend personage we have amongst us, who belongs to a very different class, and is quite the height of refinement; I believe she lays claim to various titles, but she has only made herself known to us by that from which it is evident she thinks to derive most honour, and announced that she is the friend of the Hoff-Meisterin (Mistress of the Robes) of the Archduchess Palatine, at Pesth. Doubtless, it must be a very responsible office to be friend to so great a lady, and the knowledge of her high station impresses her with a constant solemnity. She speaks French perfectly, and is well acquainted with Vienna and its courtly manners. She is certainly not less than fifty, or under six feet high, and broad in proportion; the height increased by the most ponderous of blonde caps, the breadth by the stiffest of silks and satins; we were, therefore, much amused with the character she gave of herself, so little in accordance with her appearance, when she declared she was too timid a demoiselle to go into the saloon to dinner, unless I would take her under my protection. This, of course, I was delighted to afford her, and she entered the room, leaning on my arm, and stepping mincingly along, in a manner which drew forth various malicious remarks from our friends on my timid protégée and myself.

She then informed us she would keep meagre, which she did, with the help of a larger quantity of potage than I could have conceived it possible for any one to consume; and she displayed a certain degree of narrow-mindedness and self-sufficiency in her religion, which I hope is peculiar to the friend of the Hoff-Meisterin alone, and not general amongst Hungarian ladies. Monsieur de B—— had always informed us that his nephew had gained a prize at College, destined to reward

a perfect knowledge of the German language, and it is probable that he can, indeed, read it very well; but his accent is very peculiar, and as he has never attempted to speak it before, no waiter has yet been found capable of understanding him; so that, when he gives his orders, their interpretation of his carefully-prepared speeches, invariably appears in the shape of some strange breakfast or dinner, altogether different from what he has asked and expected; and then Monsieur de B—— invariably exclaims, with a look of surprise, "*et pourtant*, Ernest, you gained the prizè for," &c.: the climax, however, was put to his discomfiture, to-day, in the most amusing manner.

We had agreed to play at chess, and he volunteered to ask for the chess-board, refusing all offers of assistance. Presently he came back, most triumphantly, to say that the man had perfectly understood him, and was to bring it immediately. He prepared the little table between us with great animation, and called for all our companions, who were in the habit of watching our play. We waited some time, but the chess-board did not appear, and at last the waiter happening to pass through the room, Monsieur Ernest asked if he were not going to bring it? His answer was prompt but mysterious; he said that it was not yet heated. We had heard of heated chess-players, but never of a heated chess-board; and Monsieur Ernest began to look very uneasy, when suddenly the door opened, and the man appeared with a large leg of ham, smoking hot, which he placed on the table between us, with plates and every thing requisite, for a comfortable *dejeuner à deux*, which he supposed we meant to enjoy together. There is, in fact, a considerable similarity between the words which express in German a ham and a chess-board; and amidst the rage of Monsieur Ernest, and the infinite

amusement of every one else, the voice of Monsieur de B—— was still heard wondering "et pourtant, Ernest, tu as gagné," &c.

May 24th.

The country is still flat and tame, though seemingly rich and well cultivated. We scarcely passed any object of interest till late in the day, when we reached Illok; a remarkably pretty village, with a ruined castle above. We feel ourselves now as though almost in a different world from that we have inhabited so long in the East. The landscape, the sky, the atmosphere; the very air we breathe, are all so totally different, there seems to be so much more of life and vigour and freshness round us now. We have indeed left far behind the land where a calm contemplation seems the frame most befitting the impressive lessons its every scene can teach, and whose bright things are all most beautiful in decay! Now we may see the sunshine gleaming on the busy village or the ripening field, and no more only on the shattered column or the deserted theatre; yet here, too, nature has her objects whose decay is beautiful: the twilight hour is worth all the twelve of sunny light, and there is nothing more lovely than the unconscious face of a dying child, like the poor young creature we have with us, who is going to Pesth for change of air, and will assuredly never leave it again.

To-day, more than ever, we had recourse to our own resources for amusement, for we stopped nowhere, and the scene was throughout much the same. Amongst our companions in the ladies' cabin, there was one old lady who has proved to be a very singular character. She has, for these two days, kept herself aloof from every one, with a marked distaste to society of any kind, and having

installed herself in a corner, with a little table beside her, she surrounded herself with a number of books and writing materials, and seemed to plunge at once into some very profound studies. She is far from good-looking, deadly pale, and with a bright, restless eye, that is full of thought. I happened to go into the room to-day when she was there alone, and as I turned to leave it, she called to me in a strange, mournful sort of voice, and asked me if I would grant her a favour. I turned immediately and she made room for me to sit beside her. Then taking one of her books, she showed me that it was a copy of "Childe Harold," and asked me to read a few stanzas aloud to her. This was soon done; and she then told me that it was the first time she had ever heard English read, though so passionate was her admiration for Lord Byron's works that she had learned to read it perfectly, solely in order that she might translate this poem for her own benefit.

She showed me the translation, which was in German verse, and seemed really very admirable, certainly a most laborious undertaking at her time of life. She said she had learned to read English, French, and Italian, without a master, because she hated all mankind, and would have no intercourse with any one; but she had wished to become acquainted with the works of the poets who had written in those languages, as literature was her sole delight. She gradually grew more confidential, and told me that she lived perfectly alone, and that, as she expressed it, her life was of no use to any one. She occupied herself solely in literary pursuits, reading and composing and existing in an ideal world of her own creating.

After conversing with her for some time, I began to feel the very deepest compassion for this miserable old

woman, who, at the close of a long life, was wasting her redeemless days in occupations that were poison to her own mind, and utterly useless to all others; and I pitied her not the less, that she evidently possessed no mean intellect, or talent. She was a cold and morbid misanthrope, from the fatal cause which has made misanthropes of so many. She had taken a totally mistaken view of life: it was easy to gather her history from her. In her youth, she had looked round, and seen a bright and beautiful world, and felt within herself a deep capacity for enjoyment; and she had therefore fallen into the common error of supposing, that she was created for no other purpose but to gather to herself as much happiness as she possibly could on this earth. Heedless of the revelation which would have taught her better things, when the hour of disenchantment came, as come it will to each one who enters on that darkest of struggles, and seeks to grapple with his destiny, her soul was turned to bitterness; and henceforward the life she had arrogated to herself, and, seeking to use, had abused, flowed away in vain dreams, and vainer repinings.

And she still looked on all things in a distorted point of view. She had no real religion, her eyes had not been anointed that she might look up and see, for then, when she had understood and felt how she herself had been redeemed from all iniquity, she would have also comprehended how long before this puny earth existed, far back in the unfathomable depths of eternity, there has been going on an awful combat between Good and Evil, and that even, perhaps, this world may have been built as the field where the last war is to be carried on, and the Evil finally subdued. But, be this as it may, it was dreadful to hear that old woman say that her life and intellect were of no use to any one, when the same unutterable love, which rescued

us all from the power of ill, has ordained that every one of us shall himself be an agent, miserably weak it is true, but still an agent in this stupendous work. It is our work, too, from the cradle to the grave. Whatever we may be, wherever we may go, there is our portion, to combat the evil—to further the good! The means are never wanting under any circumstances; all creation is engaged in it; and the meanest and poorest amongst us may find therein his glory and his happiness.

This poor misanthrope seemed to recoil back upon herself all the more, for her momentary display of feeling; the confidence she had reposed in me seemed to have been but the effect of a sudden longing for human sympathy; and no sooner had she thus told me the story of her life, than she turned from me, almost rudely, and, resuming her studies, refused to look up or speak.

Amongst the various features of the present state of the world, with which we can only become acquainted in travelling, there is one far from unimportant, which, however extensive our wanderings, may escape our perception altogether. This is what may almost be termed the *omnipresence* of the body of Jesuits. We all know, as a general fact, that this society is widely dispersed, singularly powerful, and at work everywhere, constantly and skilfully; but we are not prepared to find that our own most intimate friend and companion, perhaps, is one of their secret agents! Or, associating in our minds the idea of a Jesuit solely with a Roman priest and an austere life, that some seemingly gay and dissipated man of the world, haunting boudoir and ball-rooms, is not the less an active servant to the society, acting solely under their orders; that his part has been assigned to him, as layman, and his sphere is the fashionable world.

We have great reason to think that we have been

for some time past travelling with one of the most faithful members of this body. If it be so, however, it is very unwittingly that he has betrayed himself; for it is only within the last few days, that, after many and earnest discussions on the subject of religion, during which the soundness of his views, as well as his enlightenment, struck me with astonishment, he has gradually unfolded himself as a most zealous partisan of this great and mysterious society. I was very glad, however, to-day, to listen to his open defence of them; for it is, of course, so rarely that we hear any thing but a sweeping condemnation, that it was well for once to hear an advocate on the other side.

But even with a view to dispose me favourably towards them, he gave me a most extraordinary idea of the tremendous extent of their secret influence. If what he let me perceive be true, in France, England, Germany, everywhere, in short, it is around us at all times, prosecuting its mysterious labours, by ways and means we least dream of. He utterly condemned, and I think with reason, the works of Eugène Sue on this subject; though I firmly believe the actual truth respecting the Jesuits to be infinitely more frightful and more astonishing than that author has represented them, yet there is no doubt that the half of what he states is invention, and a clumsy invention too.

We began to feel somewhat out of humour with the rain, which still confined us to the cabin, though there is happily nothing to be seen from the deck. Our evening's adventures terminated in an amusing retribution which befell the friend of the Hoff-Meisterin to-night. Every one who has travelled knows well, that nowhere does the very despicable and universal sin of selfishness appear in

so unfavourable a light as on a journey. In a luxurious house, where every one is comfortable, the most egotistical person can afford to be considerate and obliging; but where the accommodation is inadequate to the numbers, and there is no rule but justice or generosity for the various arrangements, it is a very different matter.

I do not know if it be the character of the German ladies in general, but certainly those with whom we have to do, show a very sufficient care of themselves, and a want of gentleness and consideration for others, which is very far from pleasing. The friend of the Hoff-Meisterin, in particular, evidently possesses a share of egotism quite in accordance with the size of her person. Our accommodation for the night, just now, is wretched—so wretched, that I would recommend future travellers to perform as much as they can of this part of the journey by land. There is but one room, and no other couches, but a few small, narrow sofas; but it is our numbers principally which incommode us seriously, as on a moderate computation there is a cushion for every two ladies, and a sofa for every three.

Last night the friend of the Hoff-Meisterin passed a very bad night—but so we all did—and to-day she was determined to fare better: so she sailed into the cabin about eight o'clock, to insure being the first, and having selected the best sofa, actually piled on it every cushion and pillow she could get hold of. She succeeded in making a very comfortable erection, and after an elaborate toilette, according to the fashion of German ladies, proceeded to deposit herself thereon, in so easy and luxurious a position, as to excite the indignation of the whole party when they assembled, and found that she had actually possessed herself of every thing provided for the accommodation of all. But the avenger was at hand. It so chanced

that the foundation to the whole pile of cushions was a carpet-bag, whose owner was a very vulgar, rude little woman. As soon as she perceived her property unconsciously aiding and abetting in making the aggressor so much more comfortable than she had any right to be, without saying a word, she ran straight up to the friend of the Hoff-Meisterin, who was by this time placidly sleeping—dreaming, possibly, of that lady—when, seizing the bag, she drew it abruptly from under the great erection, and instantly, just as she expected, the whole pile was upset, the fabric gave way altogether, and cushions and pillows came rolling to the floor, bringing with them the Hoff-Meisterin's unfortunate friend, whose unwieldy frame caused something like an earthquake, as she came down with great violence in the midst of us all, and lay scolding in German in the most amusing manner.

May 25th.

We rejoiced greatly in the bright sunny morning which gladdened our eyes to-day, as we should indeed have been unfortunate, had we been destined to reach Pesth in bad weather. There was a fresh breeze, and occasional showers still drifted across the plain, from whose monotony we have not yet escaped; but they did not obscure the sun, and only danced among the trees they refreshed so well, with the rays glancing through them, till they sparkled like a shower of diamonds. We passed various towns to-day, but none are of any interest; we stopped at several—Mohacs, Baja, and others; all are much the same in appearance, seldom either picturesque or handsome, the buildings invariably all quite modern, the streets wide and straggling.

At last, however, towards evening, long lines of water-mills on the banks announced our approach to Pesth,

and entering gradually into a narrow channel of the river, we came suddenly in sight of the Hungarian capital. Great as were our expectations of the city of the Magyar, the "Buda-Pesth," as they now call the twin towns, they were certainly not raised too high. It is indeed a most striking and interesting place, and as peculiar as it is picturesque. On the one side of the river lay Pesth, a handsome modern-looking town, though I believe it is in reality one of the oldest in Hungary, with long ranges of wide streets, lined with stately buildings, and a magnificent quay skirting the edge of the water; whilst, linked to it by a handsome bridge, on the opposite side, the rocky, irregular, but beautiful Offen or Buda, rises from amongst fine old trees, and fantastic rocks, with its rugged heights, its ancient palace, and its frowning Blocksberg.

And between those contrasted towns, which form indeed one city, though so different in their varied styles of beauty, our noble Danube rolled proudly along, the strength of the current in this spot tinging its sea-green waters everywhere with foam. Buda-Pesth is certainly as unique and romantic a town as I ever have seen, though there are fewer traces of the variations of its fortunes formerly than we had anticipated. We landed at Pesth, and were conducted through large streets, past a handsome theatre, and various other really splendid buildings, till we reached our hotel. We had loyally chosen the "Kœniginn von England," which we found clean and pleasant in every respect. The period allotted for our stay was, however, far too short to admit of loitering: it was already evening, and we started at daybreak. We therefore hurried out to inspect the town, whilst the light still remained to us.

Pesth itself is quite in the style of most of the large German towns; but the Hungarian peasants in the

streets, with their wide hats and long mantles, and the waggons, with teams of several horses abreast, even the splendid carriages, with their fierce chasseurs, and haughty masters within, wrapt, on that warm summer evening, in rich furs, stamped it at once with a peculiar character. The shops were large and good, seemingly; but we saw very few churches of note, and none of them were open. This was evidently the fashionable part of the town, and as it was just the hour of the evening promenade, the streets were filled with a gay and animated crowd,—equipages of all sorts driving to and fro, and young Hungarian nobles riding their fiery horses with considerable ease and grace.

Their skill in horsemanship may have struck us the more, from the contrast it afforded with the Turkish mode of riding, to which we were most accustomed, and which the short stirrups and high saddle renders so particularly inelegant, though their seat is wonderfully firm. I have seen both Turks and Greeks, when playing the game of the jereed, almost fling themselves off to pick up their spear from the ground, when passing at full gallop, and regain their position again with extraordinary dexterity.

The beauty of the higher classes in Pesth also struck us considerably—the men were almost invariably tall and dignified-looking, the women remarkable for the freshness of their complexion and delicacy of their features. But not all the charms of the fair Hungarian peasants, with their piquant costumes, or the yet fairer dames, dressed with so much less taste, in an elaborate display of the last Vienna fashions, could retain us in this pretty little modern town, when, just opposite, Buda looked so invitingly quaint and picturesque, with its bold, commanding rock, and fine old buildings clustering on the hill. We therefore

soon crossed the long bridge which connects the city, and seemed to have gone back a century or two in the act, so great a contrast was this curious old town, very quiet and desolate, to the gay and fashionable Pesth.

We met none but peasants, and few even of them, as we ascended the dark, narrow streets, towards the hill, where the only remarkable buildings are grouped near each other. It is strange that this town, though sufficiently ancient-looking, can show no traces now of the dominion of the Turks once established here for so long a period, nor yet of the many sieges it sustained against them later. One fine old Gothic church, the largest in the place, was for a considerable time used as a mosque, and perhaps the interior may retain some traces of this episode; but it was locked, and we had no means of gaining admittance.

Offen (so called from its natural hot springs, which certainly do make it in one sense like an enormous stove), though seemingly so much less frequented than its rival, Pesth, is nevertheless the seat of government. And the palace of the prince palatine is a large, extensive building, finely situated on the hill side. It is now inhabited by the Archduke Joseph and his wife, a princess of Wirtemburg. We wandered on till we came within the court-yard of this castle; that is Monsieur de B——, Monsieur Ernest, and myself; for the rest of the party remained below to wait for us, finding the ascent too fatiguing. Both the gentlemen were very anxious to visit the interior, especially Monsieur Ernest, who was extremely desirous of seeing the famous crown of St. Stephen, held so sacred by the Hungarians, which he believed to be preserved within some apartment of this palace; but we had foolishly omitted to take a guide, and a surly-looking sentinel only responded with a determined shake of the

head to Monsieur Ernest's requests, delivered in most florid German, and Monsieur de B——'s mute appeals, which were decidedly French, and consisted in taking off his hat imploringly.

Just then a very splendid carriage, with a powdered coachman and chasseur, drove out from under the gateway, and passed us rapidly. Suddenly, to our surprise, it swept round again, and returned to where we stood. It stopped close to us, and we saw that it contained two ladies, one of whom, though, strange to say, she was going out to drive without a bonnet, was most magnificently dressed. She addressed me in French, told me that she was sure I was English, that it was a nation she extremely loved, and that as we seemed embarrassed, she would be very glad to be of use to us in any way. We were much obliged, and told her we wished to visit the castle, but could not obtain permission; whereupon she instantly turned to her chasseur, and bid him go and tell the people within that it was the Hoff-Meisterin's desire that these strangers be admitted everywhere. We were greatly amused to find we had actually made acquaintance with this much talked of lady; but before we had time to thank her, she had driven off, leaving us to the full benefit of her good offices; for the doors now flew open to us as though by magic.

The palace is spacious and handsome, and there is a good deal of fine old furniture, especially of tapestry; but it was well worth going through it all, were it only for the view from the windows, which is indeed beautiful, and totally different, I should imagine, from what could be seen anywhere else. The buildings of Offen rising up below, grouping in so well with old trees and rocky heights; then the river, whose winding course can be traced to a great distance, both above and below the city, and the whole of the

noble town of Pesth spread out on the plain before us, its white houses glittering in the last rays of the setting sun. But most beautiful of all are the Palatine gardens, which are on an island in the centre of the Danube, and into whose thick green shades we looked from the terraces of the palace.

We saw this charming view, and every thing else worth seeing in that long suite of apartments, under the guidance of a Swiss more deplorably stupid than any I have yet met with; but the recommendations of the Hoff-Meisterin evidently made him very anxious to satisfy us in every way, and his attempts to comprehend the questions with which Monsieur Ernest assailed him with the greatest volubility, and in his own peculiar German, were most amusing. Sometimes he put on an expression of the most hopeless despondency, and turned to me as though he thought I should have been able to understand him, saying, piteously, "What does the little gentleman want?" At last, when he seemed about to usher us out without our having seen the famous crown, Monsieur Ernest became highly excited, and his impatience rendering him still more incoherent, the poor man grew quite bewildered, and, not having the smallest idea of what he was asking for, the conversation which followed between them was most ludicrous. "Sie haben ein Kron?" (you have got a crown?) said Monsieur Ernest to him, very decidedly. "I? Armer mensch!" "I have got no crown." "Yes, you have—you have got a crown and a sceptre." "Holy Saint Nicholas! I have neither crown nor sceptre—I am a poor man with a large family." "A king's crown," shouted Monsieur Ernest, "and a sceptre, and a mantle." "Ich bin kein könig," he said, doggedly, "and I have not got a sceptre, I keep the keys." At last, catching at a word, he made out his meaning, and told us the crown

was at Vienna; when Monsieur de B—— wound up the whole by remarking, "Et pourtant, Ernest, it is very, strange that you should have gained," &c.

We lingered so long in the castle, that it was very late when we found ourselves once more in the quiet, silent street; but we were very anxious to ascend to the Observatory, which is situated on the summit of the Blocksberg, and from whence we were sure the view must be splendid. The ascent is somewhat fatiguing, slanting up the side of a green hill, carpeted with short grass; but we were amply repaid when we reached the Observatory; for the wide panorama of the country which is there displayed to view, with all its details so very striking, was a sight that would indeed have been a great loss to have missed.

The Blocksberg is so steep and precipitous, as almost to overhang the Danube at this point, and the Observatory, which crowns its rocky summit picturesquely enough, belongs, I believe, to the university, which is established in this city, and is, I think, the only one in Hungary. We found here a very obliging personage in charge of an enormous telescope, which he arranged for us so that we could read the inscriptions on the buildings in Pesth quite easily. The view was so very beautiful, that we lingered long in the little garden surrounding the house; and at last we were still more unwilling to move, when Pesth began to be lit up with long rows of lamps like fiery serpents, and the whispering of waters came up to us from an invisible river, that sometimes was revealed for a moment by the flashing lights in the boats or rafts. In Offen all was dark and silent; great rocks and thick masses of foliage alone standing out against the pure sky, excepting where the brilliant windows of the palace cast a strong glow on the streets below.

I do not know how long we might have stayed there, tracing even in the dim starlight the silver thread of the great stream, miles and miles away over the dark plain, had it not occurred to us that the passage of the bridge might be closed after a certain hour, an idea under whose influence we made the descent in an incredibly short space of time. We passed through the sombre, quiet town, and found the bridge still open, and still covered with waggons with their jingling bells sounding clear in the night air. In Pesth itself the scene was even gayer by the lamp-light than by day; the people were all out walking, the theatre was just opening, and the gaily-dressed company were crowding in. The casino, which is, I believe, admirably conducted, and a great advantage to this place, looked especially brilliant, and seemed quite full. We are told that there are now so many institutions of this nature in Pesth, libraries, concert-rooms, and so on, that it has become a very favourite residence for the English. I should imagine it to be a very agreeable one; the society is good, they say, the climate agreeable, and the country is certainly beautiful.

We had greatly rejoiced in the prospect of a comfortable night's rest, after so many spent in wars with the musquitoes, and endeavours to make carpet-bags, and even portmanteaux, supply the place of pillows, which they did *hardly*. But we were destined again to have our slumbers broken in upon, though in a much more agreeable manner. In the middle of the night we were awoke by the sound of most beautiful music, directly under the windows. It was the full clear burst of an instrumental band, the air they played was joyous and exulting, and between the strains there was a prolonged shout of enthusiastic vivats. We were all effectually roused, and

every one flew to their respective window; and there, surrounding the hotel, was a splendid procession, with torches, and banners, and flowers, and every thing that could render it gay and dazzling. There were priests, too, with the cross, and soldiers innumerable. The music continued some time, and then I heard a window, directly below mine, opened; then the shouts became tremendous, and soon afterwards the procession moved on. We were told the next morning, that it had been in honour of Count ———, who was residing in the hotel, having just returned to Pesth, after having performed some signal service to Hungary—of what nature we could not ascertain, although sufficiently important to have acquired for him the title of benefactor of his country; but what I thought really touching, as it was said to have emanated solely from the people, was the delicate consideration which made them choose that this compliment should be paid to him in a midnight procession, because he is blind, and could not have seen it any better by day. I do not know if in this country, what is called a popular movement be at all more in accordance with its name than elsewhere. I know that in Greece, when traced up to its source, such a demonstration is generally found to have resulted in the very private movement of some one peculiarly interested individual.

May 26th.

We walked down through the wide, empty streets, almost at daybreak, to embark once more *en route* for Vienna. This distance is shorter by land, and many prefer leaving the steamboat conveyance here, on account of the extreme discomfort to which the traveller is now subjected. The accommodation, always bad, is totally inadequate to

the numbers who daily crowd on board them to go to Vienna, and there certainly is but the choice of submitting to a day or two of great inconvenience, or abandoning altogether the inspection of a very pleasing portion of this interminable river.

The rival towns had changed parts this morning, for it was now Pesth which lay so quiet and deserted, and Buda that seemed all stir and animation. But we could easily account for this contrast; for we had seen last night that the principal inhabitants of Pesth were of that class, who prefer the artificial light of scenes of gaiety, and the artificial smiles which these call forth, to the glory of the rising sun, and the first smile with which nature greets him; whereas, when we passed through Buda yesterday evening, already all the simple inhabitants were extinguishing their lamps, and closing their houses to seek repose, so that they were all ready to-day to welcome their magnificent stream, as he caught the early sunbeams, and turned them into diamonds on his sparkling breast, or tossed his wreaths of foam in the free morning air.

We have often wished since we began this journey, that this kingly river had an historian more properly his own, who would give a detailed and accurate account of the wars of the Danube, from the days of old Solyman the Magnificent, up to the period of the late campaigns. We have been reading the record which he himself has kept in his old ruins and shattered fortresses, and often in the names of his seemingly modern villages, so distinctly traceable to the ancient dominion of the Turks; and all this tells of many a struggle, of which the details, too minute or numerous for a more general account, must be very interesting. From Pesth onwards, the pages of this record of his become greatly more romantic and fantastic; although they

tell of times so much more recent, that even the foot-print of the giant conqueror himself may be traced upon the sand.

But principally the castellated ruins and solitary towers, which now crown its rocks, or peep from behind its clustering trees, are connected with visionary stories of the feudal time; all those old legends of true knights, and brave old barons, which come home to our hearts so much more closely than the stirring memory of battles, because they tell of the trials of individuals, and of the sorrows and affections common to us all.

We shall always find that our interest is roused at once by any account which the mind can unconsciously apply to itself; and the details of any act whatever of that most familiar Death, will never fail to excite our sympathies, merely because we know that he hovers daily over the head of those most dear to us. So profound, indeed, is my belief in the inherent selfishness of human nature, that could a misfortune be named in which it were impossible we ever could have a share, I am certain we should feel no compassion for it.

The scenery of the Danube now partakes much of the nature of the Rhine, only infinitely superior, from the far greater volume and majesty of its own vast stream, and the more imposing and bolder form of its rocky banks. The banks present to-day, besides the invariable charm of heights—rugged in form, and clad in green woods—various more conspicuous objects. The first of these is the strikingly picturesque Castle of Vissegrade, once, I believe, a residence of the kings of Hungary. It is probably finer in ruins than when it was entire—as very many of these old buildings are; for the actual architecture is generally heavy and irregular but we see few traces of the splendid pleasure-grounds and gardens which they say once sur-

rounded it. Shortly after passing it, the river, taking a rapid turn, sweeps grandly round the foot of a lofty precipice, on the summit of which stands the town of Gran, the seat of ecclesiastical power in Hungary, and not more remarkable for the extreme beauty of its position, than for the magnificence of its buildings. The cathedral, especially, which absolutely overhangs the river, is most splendid; it is of recent construction, and indeed is yet unfinished, but is in infinitely better taste than half the modern buildings, especially churches, which are to be seen now. A beautiful statue of the blessed Virgin, standing in the portico, has, from the water, a most striking effect. She is represented pointing upwards: the whole of the dexterously-wrought marble eloquent of the thought conveyed in the inscription over her head, "Quæ sursum sunt, quærite."

Besides this fine building, the Archbishop's Palace and various others add to the imposing aspect of the town. The steamer stops continually now, for five minutes at a time, to take in the passengers from all the little towns we pass; which creates a constant confusion that is far from agreeable. Amongst those who are with us to-day, there is a gentleman, high in office in Vienna, with whose brother we had been very intimate elsewhere, and we therefore formed a speedy acquaintance with him. In the course of conversation, the death of the Duke of Reichstadt was spoken of, when, to my great astonishment, he mentioned quite casually—as if it were a fact well known—the circumstance of his death by poison! Surely it is generally believed that his death resulted from natural causes? Whatever surmises there may be on the subject, I have never heard it positively affirmed before that his existence terminated violently; but this

gentleman seemed to have no doubt of the fact, and rather appeared surprised that any one should dispute it.

It would seem that politics amongst the Hungarians themselves are the favourite topic of conversation; when several of them assembled together, they invariably entered on the subject, but to-day, at dinner, the discussion which arose became so violent as to be rather alarming, and the captain was obliged to put a stop to it. The animation and excitement of the speakers were extreme. They were discussing, I believe, some of the debates at the last session of the diet, which is held at Presburg.

In the evening, we were regaled by a concert, which was performed by five or six Hungarian peasants, unasked. They ranged themselves in a line, flung back their sheepskins, and, with the accompaniment of a sort of guitar, sung a long ballad in the Magyar tongue, the words of which we would fain have understood, for it seemed greatly to interest all their countrymen. The air appeared to me very ancient, and was not unmusical, though somewhat wild. We cannot yet venture to remain on deck after nightfall, in our prudent dread of fevers and ague, and it is no small privation; for the cabin is close and crowded, and the glance I could not resist stealing from the deck this evening, showed me that the scenes on the Danube by night are quite as attractive as by day.

There was something very grand in this powerful stream, rushing through the darkness, with the bold outline of its cliffs well defined against a cloudless sky, and myriads of stars —all strangers to me, for they were not the stars of Greece —quivering and trembling, reflected in its troubled bosom. Of the miseries of the night which followed, no one can have an adequate conception, who has never been shut into a room, some twelve feet square, with fourteen

unaccommodating German ladies, and whole legions of musquitoes.

May 27th.

We were called up early on deck to-day to see the town of Presburg, with whose incomparative insignificance I was a little disappointed—perhaps, because it is a spot so connected with the history and the times of Maria Theresa, that the name is everywhere well-known, and leads one to look for a more important place; beautiful, from its position and its luxuriant wood, it certainly is, and the town is probably much more extensive than we could judge of from the deck of the steamer. Seen from the river, the ruins on the hill over the town have a fine effect, principally from the bold forms of the wooded cliffs amongst which they rise, for they exhibit but the blackened remains of the palace which was destroyed by fire. The modern buildings, though none of them appear to be remarkable, form, as a whole, rather a graceful combination. The opposite shore, where the pleasure gardens are laid out—connected with the town by the invariable bridge of boats, which always is so light and elegant—look very inviting. Presburg still holds to its ancient right of having the meetings of the diet held, and the kings of Hungary crowned, within its walls.

A very old and very enthusiastic Hungarian lady, told me she had witnessed the coronation of the present emperor here, as king of her fatherland; and by her account it must really have been a splendid sight, when he rode out, on a height which overlooks the river, with the sword of St. Stephen in his hand, and, in presence of the whole assembled Hungarian noblesse, made the sign of the cross with it in the air, over their country,

whilst he took the holy vow to protect it in justice and love. I was somewhat inclined to ask her if she thought he had kept his vow, but it was too hazardous a question. Rudolph of Hapsburg seems to have been the great hero of this part of the country. Almost every ruin or town we pass has some legend of him.

The Castle of Theben is very beautifully situated; but, excepting this and a few pretty villages, lying among vineyards, there is but little that is interesting between Presburg and Vienna. The country becomes flat and low, though it is richly cultivated and embellished to a great distance with gardens and villas, which indicate the vicinity of a large and populous town. It was not until late in the afternoon, that after a heavy shower of rain, a gleam of returning sunshine showed us at last a wide, sweeping plain, green with the early harvests, where lay, spread out before us in its noble buildings and extensive gardens, stretching away much further than the eye could follow, one of Europe's stateliest cities.

CHAPTER XVII.

Vienna—How the civilised City appeared to the Pilgrims from the East—Death shows how all the Kings of the Earth hold their Lands in Vassalship to him—The Tombs of the Emperors—The Heart of Napoleon's Son a lucrative Possession—His Tutor's Account of his Life—His Empire at Schonbrunn—The Music of the Imperial Chapel—The Emperor and Empress—The Monument—Strauss—The Exposition of Manufactures—The Danube once more—The rival Castles of Richard Cœur de Lion—Moelk—The Wirbel and the Strudel—Linz—The River abandoned at last—The Voice of the Danube—The Retrospect of a Journey—The Traveller called on to aid the two guiding Spirits of this Earth.

On us pilgrims from the East, one of whose wild poetic lands had so long been our familiar home the week spent in this well-known and much frequented city must leave a very different impression from that which it would produce on the mind of the visitor, who comes but to compare the refinement of Vienna with the refinement of the Paris or the London he has left. Here were no strange customs to record, or barbarian ignorance to deplore; it was but one of the central seats of European civilisation, but to us, fresh from the study of nature in its unvarnished evil or its unsullied good, the whole machinery and framework, the whole artificial system of this civilisation, seemed new and strange.

We had come from those vast solitudes where the mute eloquence of a wonderful creation and all its mingled harmonics had vied with each other to tell us only of

the glory of the Creator, and from lands where the great voice of the past is incessantly proclaiming the utter littleness of man, and how that his existence is the veriest item given for good indeed, but in soberest truth a vapour that vanishes in air. Now here all was of man and for man; all the gorgeous, luxurious arrangements seemed designed to illustrate a practical materialism which should make this life, visible and palpable, to be the all with nothing beyond or within, no internal existence in hope and love of immortal souls.

We grow used to any atmosphere, however noxious, when we have breathed it long; even while secretly it saps the springs of life, and equally, perhaps more readily, we grow used to breathe the exhalations from the world of corruption, falsity, and folly; but our eyes, dazzled with the glare of the burning Eastern sun on the desert plains, where the destroying wing of Time himself has swept in vain and left no trace, looked wonderingly now on the hollow splendour and unmeaning pomp with which men here most seek to surround each vain detail of their little miserable existence; and to our ears, filled with the roaring of the waters through the river solitude, the very rolling of their gaudy equipages along the crowded streets sounded strange, because their prancing horses were in actual fact designed to drag away their leaden hours.

Then we had been dwelling with the heathen nations, with beings of the earth—earthy; and we had longed for lands of enlightenment, and a people of purer hopes with the longing of those for the morning dawn, who are weary of darkness and night. And Christian churches there were enough indeed, in magnificent architecture, gorgeous in decoration. That splendid old cathedral of St. Stephen's is, in itself, perhaps, one of man's least vile attempts to build a

fitting temple to his God; but still the influence of religion in these great cities of intellectual and material refinement, where most they seek to embellish and enrich its outward signs and symbols, has ever seemed to me like the pure sunshine pouring its radiance on a mass of cold waters: it causes them to sparkle and to beam, far more than the dark earth it fructifies so well; but not a ray can penetrate within the chill and monster-haunted depths.

There is another strange thing that strikes forcibly on the minds of those who wander, as we have done, from place to place, from rural town to courtly city; how, on entering into each new country, straightway, in some one shape or other, Death comes stalking out to meet us, in order that he may assert to us that whosoever be nominally reigning here, this is his territory also, and show how all the kings of the earth do hold their lands in vassalship to him. Now here, lord of this stately city, and of the vast empire which surrounds it, an emperor sits crowned, and one of the first things they took us to see was the tombs of the emperors!—and it is a sight worth seeing, to behold how these assembled monarchs, so great upon the earth, have exchanged their gorgeous palaces and trains of courtly attendants for the prisons of this dungeon vault, and one Capuchin monk their gaoler! There is more of truth and sincerity, too, displayed in the decorations of these tombs than is usually allowed to approach even the mouldering ashes of kings; for they have placed the crown, by which they think it necessary still to mark out the high station they held among men, on the head of a bare and grinning skull.

It is marvellous to see how custom will enable man to show a complacent inhumanity, a systematic want of feel-

ing, which is very revolting. Could any thing be more horrible than the next sight they took us to see? The heart of Napoleon's son become a lucrative object of gain, and the right of showing it in its silver case, and receiving payment from the curious visitor, a post eagerly sought after!

Surely, if ever any might claim a right, from the unloveliness of life, to sleep well after that fitful fever, it is this poor guileless heir to the shadows of vast kingdoms, and to the visions of empires. Inheritor of a curse, in the name that was written in blood on the earth, the cup of life must have been full of bitterness to him; and, perhaps, if it be true that he was not permitted to drain it to the dregs, he may have blessed the hand that dashed it from his young lips, to replace it with a deadlier draught. One of our most intimate friends was tutor to the Duke of Reichstadt, and from all he says it may be hoped that the retirement in which his brief existence was passed, was very favourable to him, in saving him from viewing the things that are both of time and eternity, in the false light of the world's teaching. It is not amongst men bewildered in their hero-worship, that we may learn how much more great in the sight of Heaven is the mortal who denies himself, to benefit but one of his fellow-creatures, than the man who sacrifices thousands to his own selfish ambition, however great his success may be. That is, indeed, the point; for in this world man judges ever by the effect; it is the Searcher of hearts alone who looks to the cause.

But more than anywhere else, the gentle spirit of Napoleon's son would seem to haunt the beautiful gardens of the Schönbrunn, where he dwelt, and loved so much to dwell. They were his empire, who at his birth was hailed as King of Rome! They are very lovely, those gardens, where the young prince wandered

so often; and however short be the stay of the stranger in Vienna, he must not omit to visit them.

Moreover, if he chance to go early on a Sunday, or a Saints day, and just at ten o'clock, should he hear a bell ring loudly from the palace, let him hurry back with all speed, however pleasant be the shade of these long avenues of stately trees, and ask admittance to the chapel. He will not be refused, if he is in good time, and the service only just begun; and passing down a long passage, they will open a little door, and he will find himself in the Imperial chapel. It is not very large, nor remarkable for its magnificence; but pealing through it in solemn melody, that will fill him with a holy awe, he will hear the most glorious music that ever bore a penitent soul on its wings to heaven. The sacred music in the chapel at Schönbrunn is famed as being quite unequalled anywhere; and although I have visited most of the cathedrals in Europe, I have certainly never heard any thing to be compared to it.

But whilst the visitor is forgetting time and space, and all things connected with his individual existence, in listening to this majesty of sound, if he should happen to observe in a gallery near him, an old man with a dim, heavy eye, whose vacant gaze is fixed upon him, and a stately lady by his side, intently occupied in making every finger of her white kid gloves fit precisely on her hand, he need not disturb his guide, who will probably be on his knees behind a pillar at his devotions, but trust to the veracity of this record, that he has seen the Emperor and Empress of Austria.

There is another thing, which he must not leave Vienna without seeing, though he might be tempted to do so, merely from the feeling of weariness, which would induce him to refuse to follow his guide into the last church into which he will propose to lead him, because

he has seen so many very similar, one to another, already; but it were better to go through no other, excepting only the noble old cathedral, whose exterior from the street alone it were worth travelling miles to see, than to miss passing into the church of the Augustines, to look on the monument of the Archduchess Christina, daughter of Maria Theresa, by Canova.

I have seen many a sculptured thought, and some which have outlived the thinker by many thousand years, but I know of none which strikes home to our human hearts with so irresistible an appeal for sympathy, as this most beautifully sad conception. I defy any one to gaze long on the graceful and exquisitely mournful train, who seem about to descend into the funereal vault, there to weep the buried youth and beauty which it has devoured, without feeling a strange sensation creeping over them, which constrains their imagination to place within that gloomy cavity, as its inmate, all stiff, and cold, and dead, some living being, yet warm with hope and energy, whom they themselves do love too well.

I trust that any one who attempts to hunt Strauss through a long summer evening, as we did the last day we passed at Vienna, may have better success. From garden to garden we chased him, like a gigantic butterfly, and though in each and all an admirable band was performing in a style to satisfy the most fastidious taste, still the great master was always declared to be presiding in the next, and so, like true mortals, we would not be contented with the pleasure within reach, as long as it was possible to grasp at more, and passed the evening wandering from one scene of amusement to another without enjoying any.

We were fortunate, during our short stay at Vienna, in seeing the exposition of manufactures, which occurs

only once in five years. Splendid furniture, models of all kinds, crystal, porcelain, silk manufactures, in short every production of the national industry which could be imagined, were very tastefully displayed in the long galleries of an extensive building. We were struck with the perfection to which they had attained in carving wood. There were several little statues which were really beautiful. One room was entirely filled with carriages, and another with specimens of the mineral resources of the country, which seemed very abundant; but, on the whole, the exposition was inferior to that of Paris.

Having duly seen all the other sights, which every one sees, and visited all the galleries of paintings, as might be testified by our aching eyes, or the painful impression left on our memory of some hundreds of pictures, all mingled together in one wild confusion never to be cleared up, we prepared to leave this very splendid and pleasant city. Monsieur de B—— and his nephew, like a pair of wolves who have snuffed the first scent of the carrion they delight in, afar off, having breathed once again the air of the civilised world, in its gaiety and luxury, were now ravenously anxious to be at the seat of all refinement, in Paris. Kentucky we abandoned on the stairs of the hotel, deliberating whether, as he had come all the way up the Danube, it would not be very good fun to go down again (I give his own words); and we ourselves determined on proceeding still two days with the steamboat conveyance on that river, for we had been told that the space between Vienna and Linz is finer than all we had already seen of the Danube. And certainly we were obliged to own, that, always excepting the mighty pass near Orsova, so unparalleled in its grand and savage beauty, such is indeed the case.

The character of the scenery is now very different from what it was in our earlier acquaintance with it. Its solitude and its vastness are gone, the river is comparatively narrow, whilst from its beautiful banks, new objects of interest start out each moment; now a ruined castle on a rugged height, haunted with strange stories of the old robber knights who dwelt in it; now a monastery hid amongst the trees, with its dull ceaseless bell, ringing out on the summer air; now a gay little village, with its garden sloping down to the water's edge; and again a turn in the river will suddenly display a beautiful view of the distant country—far off the snowy hills, and then dark forests and rich fields and vineyards all luxuriant and smiling. They showed us the Castle of Durrenstein, and told us that there our own Richard Cœur de Lion was imprisoned, and there the voice of his faithful Blondel was a twofold music to his ear; but after we had looked long upon it, with all the interest such a tradition must inspire, another passenger came hurrying to show us a different castle further on, which he declared was the true scene of that romantic incident; and then there arose a very violent discussion among the company on board, as to the claims of the rival sites, which it seems has long been in dispute. An Irishman would have recommended them to say that Blondel sung at the one and Richard was imprisoned at the other! and indeed I do not know how else they will settle it.

Late in the evening we were called up on deck to see what we could of the magnificent monastery of Moelk, by the faint light of the crescent moon; but that mild glow was at least enough to show us a very palace for stateliness and splendour, standing proudly on a precipitous rock, around whose base the river sweeps in foam. They say that Moelk dates its original foundation from

the tenth century. At all events a more princely structure, or one in a finer or more commanding position, could not well be imagined.

Very early in the morning we reached the Wirbel, which is the name they give a terrific whirlpool that suddenly appears in the centre of the river, the waters raging madly and writhing themselves within it, as though they were in an agony; and scarce has the vessel escaped from it in safety, and none but a skilful pilot could steer it past the foaming vortex that fain would suck it in, when it enters on the yet more terrible rapid of Strudel, where, only a week before we passed it, a boat containing a number of persons who had been on a pilgrimage, was dashed to pieces amongst the rocks, and sixty lives were lost; but here the river, as though it would compensate for its dangers by its beauty, grows sublime and wild again. It concentrates its waters into a narrow channel, that they may have greater power to chafe the precipices on either side; and its banks rise mountainlike once more, all clothed in sombre dark green forests. And so making us wonder, hourly,—more and more, that it should not yet be weary of charming, the Danube led us on to the quiet pretty little town of Linz.

And here at last we finally parted company with this most noble river. It seemed to us almost as though we were called on to bid farewell to a familiar friend, after so many weeks that we had trusted ourselves to its guidance, and made it a part of our daily existence.

We had followed its course since the first moment when, plunging and tossing in the midst of that dark, angry sea, our little vessel had suddenly met with a yet stronger resistance, and we were told to mark, in the discolouration of the water, how the proud Danube invaded even the stormy Euxine; then we had entered upon it in its inten-

sity of solitude, where it seems like a great mourner, with its sky-like pall, and its shroud of mists, and its deadly vapours floating on the dull air, as though it called them up to deter all human beings from intruding on its dreary loneliness; and gradually we had seen the sleeping nature awake on its lifeless banks, and throw over them a veil of summer green and wreaths of flowers; and then, like an enchanter, whilst its growing loveliness stole on us unawares, it led us on from scene to scene of quiet beauty, till, among the blooming hills of Orsova, we could have made our home for ever.

But, lest we should imagine it was always so lovely and gentle a river as it then appeared, suddenly it gathered up its tremendous waters, and showed us, as it roared through that terrific pass, how it could cleave the very mountains, and take for its rampart the mighty precipice. Soon it changed again as it drew near the heart of Europe, and like a courtly beauty, began to deck itself with jewels, and the crowning gem of all was Buda-Pesth; and so on, now smiling, now raging, but ever grand and majestic, syren-like it looked its loveliest just at the great Wirbel, as though to allure the fascinated gazer into the fatal whirlpool; and then gently and safely it bore us to the gates of Linz, that we might leave it there, and let it pass on its way at last unheeded.

And we owed it much, this mighty river, during the long period it had carried us on its breast, for it had shown us new aspects in nature, and new wonders in creation, and it had called up on its banks old dreamy memories, to teach us many an emphatic lesson, giving a record of the destinies of men departed, whose life seemed ever to have been much like our own course through the rapids, a brief struggle and then a great calm.

The voice of its many waters had become to us a well-

known music, as night after night they lulled us to sleep on its vast heaving bosom, and day after day murmured to us with that eloquence which is in every one of nature's voices. All speak the same language: whether it be uttered by the river as it disperses its rich waters to fertilise the earth, or by the autumn wind as it bears away the seed to scatter it on the ready soil: for still the burden of their song is ever of goodness and of mercy.

But the great voice of the Danube we should hear no more: it might tell its tale now, perhaps, to more attentive ears; but for us the opportunity was past, the journey ended. And there is another thought that at the close of a long journey must always, I think, rise painfully on our minds.

It is the question we must involuntarily ask ourselves, of what trace our own steps have left in the paths we have trodden in the lands we have visited? Have we walked among the barbarian nations idly to moralise over their ignorance and error, or exult in our own superior knowledge and thrice happy lot, without making one effort to cast the faintest spark of light among them? Have we gathered all the amusement, all the pleasure, which the varied scenes afforded, and can none say that we came there for good? Or, yet more, have we passed through the gay and peopled cities, where the deadly spirits of scepticism and bold vice, and false morality courted and received, are all abroad, arrogating to ourselves the blessed name of Christian, and allowed one action or one word of ours to cast dishonour or ridicule upon that high and holy calling?

These are deep questions, but they import the traveller much; for wheresoever he may wander, to and fro, upon the face of this earth, it is thus that it will ever appear to him: as a great wilderness, all storms and tempests; where the nations shall grope, as in a thick darkness, with here and there

a lightning flash, that dazzles their eyes, and, rarer far, a pure gush of sunshine, deluding not, though very bright; where shall be voices talking of justice and mercy, mingling with the groans of an oppressed people stretching out their fettered hands in vain; where shall come the deep corruption of modern society, all graceful and refined; and the proud intellect that dares reject its God—blighting the souls that escape from His hands, stamped with His image; and causing their first pure aspirations, their heaven-drawn hopes, their guilelessness of youth, to be ingulphed in the swelling waves of their evil passions and their gratified sin, like the Eden of man's first innocence buried beneath the waters of the Deluge.

But, in the midst of all this wild confusion, and gloom, and doubt, and error, and over that peopled wilderness (a wilderness though peopled, because no God is there), he will yet ever behold, now obscured, now revealed, but ever present, two glorious angels, leading on the struggling family of man; serene and calm, with steady pace and soft voice, whispering of peace and love;—and it is his, if he be true to the cause of truth, to clear away the mists before them, and shake off the dust that gathers on their snow-white garments, for these are they who bear on before us the beacon-lights of eternity, and their names are FAITH and HOPE.

THE END.

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

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